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The Interest of England

C O N S I D E R ' D ,

In Respect to

Protestants D I S S E N T I N G

From the

Etablish'd C H U R C H .

With some Thoughts

A B O U T

Occasional Conformity.

The Second Edition, Corrected and Enlarg'd.

L O N D O N ,

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ERRATA.

P A G. 6. lin. 2. after *mitigate* add *and heal*. p. 16. l. 27. dele *tend to*.
p. 32. l. ult. for *Impudence* r. *Unreasonableness*. p. 33. l. 33. for *Life-*
guards r. *Outguards*.

The P R E F A C E to the Reader.

THO I don't expect you should be pleas'd with my Thoughts about the Interest of England, yet I challenge your good Opinion of their Author. For they appear in Public for your Service, and not for his Satisfaction. He knew very well, that the pains of putting 'em together would be his : And that he must forgo the Pleasure, and the Reputation of dressing 'em out to Advantage : That you might not stay for the Thoughts of an honest Englishman till they could serve for nothing, but to aggravate your Misfortune. The Author however has this Satisfaction, whether you like him or his Book, that he does but risque his Reputation for you his dear Country-men, and for the Cause of Liberty ; for which, if it so please God, he's not afraid to lose his Life.

which Bp
P—r us'd
to call Vo-
luptas Ho-
minumq;
Deumq;

In the mean time he knows very well too, that 'tis just Thoughts and Method that render a Book useful ; and that exact Periods and easy Transitions, serve only to make it agreeable : He thinks therefore the Piece ought to be excus'd, and the Painter commended, for attending to true Features and just Proportions, tho the Colouring be not so lively, nor so clean as he could wish ; since the incredible hurry of the Draught did not allow him to pursue both.

And indeed, if he might be so free, he would let the World know, that Exactness in his Opinion would be but ill bestow'd upon a Pamphlet, which like a Mushroom is to come forth and dy in a Night. He thinks it preposterous to set out an indifferent Collation with the Order and Ceremony of a Feast : And if a sitch'd Book should appear mightily labour'd, the World wou'd presently cry, There was more Cost than Worship. The Author professes to be a good deal of their Mind. He's sensible that Occasions create and destroy Pamphlets, and raise and pall the Appetite, that must make 'em go down : He imagines the Occasion for this won't be long liv'd, and so he has been the less careful in the Performance. He only begs that the Dissenters wou'd forgive him for meddling with their Interest : And that what belongs to his mismanagement, mayn't be imputed to the Weakness of their Cause.

The Author desires his Reader too in particular to take notice, That the Representation of the State of the Reform'd Religion in the Apostolical Times, is as perfect!

In the latter end of his Tenth Chapt. of the Abrid. of Mr. Baxter's Life.

perfectly new to him, as it is likely to be to every one, that reads a little Divinity as he does, besides the Bible. And so were his Thoughts about Occasional Conformity too when they first occur'd, and he began this Subject. For tho he has read what Mr. Calamy has oblig'd the World with upon that Head, yet he did not happen to do it, till within a very few days, and after his own Thoughts upon that Matter were finish'd.

This the Author thinks himself oblig'd to say; not because he is ashamed to borrow any thing from Mr. Calamy, or from any Man of his good Sense: But only that his Reader knowing that they are not taken from Party-Writings, but the study of the Scriptures; he may be the less resolv'd against them, and searching whether they are true or no. The Author is forc'd to intimate this too, that if there be any Faults in his Reasoning upon that Head, they may be the more readily excus'd. For if he has said any thing severe upon any Men, who have different Opinions about that Matter, 'tis because he finds no strength in their Discourses, and not because he is sure that there's a great deal in his own.

The Author hopes he has given some Hints, that may help to the Deciding of the Questions about Conformity and Schism, which have cost us so dear. Possibly it will be found, that those Controversies may be set in a clearer Light from Apostolical Practice and Scripture-Criticism, than from Systematical and Abstracted Notions. If the Author's Hints, or his Ignorance, should provoke an abler Pen at more leisure, to pursue the Truth, and correct his Mistakes; he assures the World, he should think his own Time, and his Book's Reputation well bestow'd.

My Bookseller tells me, I must say something for the Second Edition, and acquaint my Reader, that there are several entire Paragraphs added relating to the proper Qualifications for Employments, to Persecution, and Uniformity; and many Additions and Alterations in other Places. There was but a very little time allow'd to the first Composure: The great hast of the Performance, like the Precipitancy of Digestion, created too many Disorders, and left too much room for Corrections and Amendments. A Review had made a great many more than the Reader will meet with, if I had not found, that the Faults of the first Edition were like those of the first Concoction, which require more Pains and Leisure than I could spare to correct in a Second. However I must say, that since my Review I have not alter'd the Thoughts themselves, so much as the Expressions.

I hope my Reader will not complain of the Additions, so much as my Bookseller. I can't pretend after all, that he offers any Wares that in my Sense or yours will be worth the Money: But he desires me to assure you, to compensate for his Trouble, that in his Sense he never sold a better Penny-worth.

THE
I N T E R E S T
O F
E N G L A N D, &c.

THE Characters under which it was thought fit to represent the Dissenters at first, to render them odious, were Rebellion and Schism: The occasion of pitching upon these was very obvious. The Monarchy and the Church had been hardly us'd by the Sectarians, who generally went under the Dissenting Name. The Reputation of the Church was pretty clear from these Imputations. She was like Apollo's chaste Nymph, for her Loyalty and Steadiness had never been try'd. And since some Charge was to be made against the Dissenters, which it might not be in their Power to retort, none could be found more fit for the purpose. But the Dissenters have had forty years leisure to vindicate their Reputation. Great pains have been taken during this Vacation from their public Labours, to reply to the Charge of Schism, and they have manag'd it pretty successfully by the help of some self-evident Principles, which they borrow'd from a great Ornament of the Church: And the late happy Government gave them an opportunity to convince

B

*Mr. Hale:
of Eaton.*

vince the World, that none bore a greater Affection than they did, to a Monarchy, when it was regulated according to our known Laws and Constitution. The Church on the contrary, during this Triumph over her Enemies, found some of her most eminent Members for their Service and high Station in the Church, as justly chargeable with Schism as the Dissenters, and much upon the same account. And the generality of both the Laity and the Clergy have had occasion to demonstrate the small Affection they have for a Monarch that shall invade their Rights, and meddle with their Property. They have parted with their two darling Notions, the Power of the Magistrate in Ecclesiastical Affairs, and the Obligation to Passive Obedience without any Limitation.

So that it is high time to lay these Accusations against the Dissenters aside. But it is thought fit that a new one should try its fate. A Rebel is inconsistent with the Government, and a Schismatic with the Church; and yet a more monstrous Character is contriv'd for a Dissenter, and he is now to be represented as a Hypocrite, and inconsistent with himself. If a Man may be allow'd to make a Conjecture, this is not like to do the Church so much Service, or the Dissenters so much Mischief as the former: Since here is room enough to recriminate, which there was not when the other Crimes were first laid to their Charge. The reasonableness of the Conjecture a little time will evince: But in the mean while one would be induc'd to believe that some Men were fated to be unhappy, and that that was all the account that could be given of the matter. The Rigor of the Dissenters gave occasion for the first Charge, and the Moderation they have shewn more frequently of late, by *Occasional Conformity*, has given birth to the last. Like the unhappy People of Rome under Tiberius; to whom every Action was liable to be misinterpreted. Concern for the Glory of the Empire, was a secret Design to gain it. Remembrance of Liberty was aiming to restore the Commonwealth: To praise Brutus and Cassius was a capital Crime, and to commend Augustus, tho Tiberius had decreed him Divine Honours, was a secret Offence. To his suspicious and credulous Temper, Simplicity of Discourse exprest evil Designs, and Silence conceal'd worse Intentions: Joy was the

the hope of the Prince's Death; Melancholy an envying his Prosperity, and Fear the boding Apprehensions of a guilty Conscience. The case of these unhappy People under Caligula resembled that of the Dissenters more nearly. For after he had made his Sister Drusilla, who had been his Harlot in her Life, a Deity at her Death; to follow his Example and be sorry for her Death, was to blaspheme her Deity; and to rejoice at her Advancement among the Gods, was to be pleas'd with her Death; and to be silent, was to be insensible of his Loss, or his Sister's Gain.

Suet. in
Vit. Tib.

In Vit. Cal.

And thus any Man would swear that the Dissenters were doom'd to Calumny and Hardships, let them behave themselves how they will, when they are to suffer for doing well merely because they don't do so always: And that at a time when doing well Occasionally is become a Mode, and a Predicament among Mankind. Astrology should be consulted what unhappy Planet reign'd when Nonconformity took its rise; since 'tis not to be allow'd the Dissenters to worship God Occasionally in a Church, when the highest Churchmen have found an Occasion to worship God in separate Meetings; and when it is but very Occasionally that the Generality of the Nation worship him at all. Who can help thinking the case of the Dissenters very peculiar and extraordinary, when they are to be inveigh'd against for their Occasional Practice; at the same time that all the World besides have found the like Practices necessary? The Passive Obedience-mongers have found it necessary upon Occasion to conform to the Doctrine of Resistance; the Tories to Whiggism, and some Whigs to the Doctrine of the Prerogative: The Prelatical Party have thought it expedient to plead for the distinct Power of Presbyters, and the Low Church for the Rights of the Archbishop: The Supporters of the *Jus Divinum* desire to be excus'd for dividing the Supremacy among the Body of the Legislature: And others, who have formerly been thought guilty of the irremissible Sin of Moderation, ask Pardon for making it to center in the King. In a word, the good Occasion of a Place has convinc'd more Non-Affociators and Non-Abjurers than Nonconformists; and has converted more

State-Dissenters than ever it has made Occasional Communicants.

But tho none are innocent, yet all are for hindring Occasional Conformity. A Religious Test for the Occasional Communicants is thought necessary by those very Men, who have of late inveigh'd very warmly against Civil ones; while there is this remarkable difference: That the Dissenters have all along excepted against the Secular Power in Sacred Matters, tho none have ever question'd its Authority to make us give any Civil Security for our Allegiance. But it should seem that Dissenters are not to have Neighbour's fare. They are to be treated as Exceptions from Human Nature, and from that standing Rule of dealing with our fellow-Creatures, as we would be dealt by. A certain Author writing very lately about the Toleration, has thought fit to give this Rule a new turn, and only to direct the Church to deal by others as others would deal by them. So that I shall not enquire *what is due to the Nonconformists from the Government by the Law of Nature, and the first Notions of Subjection*: Since upon the Principles that Men go at present, that is not like to make any great Impressions. Besides that this part of the Argument has been so excellently well treated by an able Pen, in *some Letters concerning Toleration*, that it would be a folly to say any thing more upon that Subject, than to repeat or reprint 'em. I shall therefore take the other part, and only endeavour to shew, *how England ought to behave her self to the Dissenters, from the Advantage or Disadvantage she may receive from them, according to the different Influence that her different Carriage may have upon them*. Possibly Interest may be heard when Justice can't.

This is the Question in general. Now since the Government and the Church of England are the only two Bodies, whose Carriage can affect the Dissenters; and since their Carriage can be (compar'd with what it is at present) but either moderate or severe, this general Question must consist of these two. 1. *Whether it be the Interest of the Government to treat the Dissenters with Severity or Moderation?* And, 2. *Which of the Two, whatever be the Interest of the Government, is the Interest of the Church?* The present Carriage of the Government to the Dissenters,

is known to consist in a Toleration of their way of Worship, and an Admission of any of that Perswasion, to enjoy any Place or Office, upon his receiving the Sacrament according to the manner of the Church of *England*, at his first Admission. Now then if the Government wou'd carry it more severely to the Dissenters, it must either make a new Test, which wou'd particularly keep the Dissenters out of Offices of Trust; or take away the Laws that Tolerate 'em all, and leave 'em to the Penalty of those Statutes which oblige 'em to worship God according to the manner of the Church of *England* only: This would be Severity in the Government. And 'twou'd be Severity in the Church to use her Interest (which is very considerable upon many accounts) with the Government to procure it. But on the other hand, if the Government wou'd carry it Moderately and Kindly to the Dissenters; it must at least let things remain as they are, without any alteration to their Prejudice, which satisfies the Dissenters well enough: Or if the Government wou'd carry the good-natur'd Part further, and give higher Instances of its Kindness and Desires to oblige, it must enlarge or remove the present Test; repeal those Penal Laws which are level'd against the Dissenters; and comprehend or settle them by Law, as they have the present Establish'd Church. But tho these are things that the Dissenters cou'd not but be well pleas'd with, yet possibly they are not so very proper to be thought of at present, and which they are well enough contented without. But be that how it will, 'tis certain that one or the other of these wou'd be Instances of grateful Moderation in the Government: And it wou'd be sufficient Moderation in the Church, if she wou'd use her Interest to procure it.

But I am sensible, that whilst I'm treating this part of my Subject, I handle a tender Point, and that I ought to handle it tenderly. An angry Humour has inflam'd our Parties to a very great degree. We swell and look big on each other, and the Tumour has a great many suspicious Symptoms, which make it look not so likely to scatter as to break. May the great Physician prescribe the Lenitive which may abate the Inflammation, and render Incisions and Amputations useles. For what Hand this Application is reserv'd, God only knows. But
that

that I mayn't in the mean while fret and chafe a Sore, which I wou'd do all that is in my power to mitigate, I shall forbear inquiring, *Whether it wou'd be for the Interest of England to enlarge the Test, and comprehend or settle the Dissenting way of Worship?* And only prove, that to *frame a Test, which shall make the way to Places and Offices of Trust, not only inaccessible to Dissenters, but more difficult than that already in being, is against the Interest of the Government and of the Church.* Whether this Test makes the way to a Place uneasy or perfectly bars it up, there is no great difference: For you still affect the Dissenters in their Conscience or their Interest, two tender Parts, which like the Apple of the Eye you cannot touch but you must hurt. So that if the Government should but endeavour to make the Admission to a Place more difficult, and should only endeavour that, by forbidding Persons in Office to go to Dissenting Meetings, without inflicting any Penalty, but barely that of making their Office to them to become void; or by any other the most gradual and insensible Methods that can be contriv'd; and yet still I think it may be prov'd, that it would be both against the Interest of the Church, and of the State. Only by the way, let the Reader take notice, that if it be prov'd, that this, which is the lowest Instance of Severity to the Dissenters, be against the Interest of England: it will follow of course, that all higher Instances are much more so.

That my Arguments may be the clearer, I'll only suppose that this Carriage will *disoblige* the Dissenters. And this I believe no body doubts: Yet lest my Reader should think me too bold in begging this Proposition, let him but consider, whether it will not disoblige 'em to deprive 'em of Places and Offices of Trust, and to enrich those with the Spoils, that are either Enemies to them, to the Government, or to both? Whether it will not be the surest way to exasperate them, to hinder them from enjoying the Advantages of the Government, who were so hearty in establishing the Succession, as well as the late Government, and have been so instrumental in maintaining the Honour and Dignity of the present one? Whether it will not be the greatest Affront to them, to make such a Test, as does in effect represent them to the World as having Principles, which render them unfit to be

be trusted? And from whence a Man must be forc'd to conclude, that the Government takes the Dissenters for more dangerous Men, than those who dispens'd with our Laws and betray'd our Charters. Since tho the Project to incapacitate the latter for a Term of Years was laid aside, because it would have narrow'd the Foundation of our Liberties: Yet a Test to incapacitate Dissenters for ever is introduc'd, tho no Body pretends that such a Test is the way to enlarge it. Besides that People would be the more apt to make this Inference, because else it would not be easy to account, how it comes to pass, that some should be treated worse for acting according to their Conscience, than some others for acting against it. Nay and in short, from whence a Man must collect (as every one must from a Negative Test, that should only forbid Men to frequent or go to Dissenting Meetings) that the Government thinks the Dissenters more unfit for Places of Trust, meerly because they worship God in a Meeting, than it does an Atheist, a Deist, a Socinian, or a Libertine, that either owns no God, or worships none after a Christian manner. If these Consequences be not justly drawn, why must there be a Test contriv'd against pretended Schismatics, when there is none in Being or Design, against those more heinous Offenders?

But if the Reasoning be just, how unaccountable will it be to punish Men, who hitherto stand unconvicted, by depriving 'em of a Legal Capacity to receive the Honors and Profits of a Place of Trust? This is equal to affecting a Man's Property by a Fine, or to the depriving him of a Legal Capacity to receive the Benefits of a Legacy or an Executorship. A Man has a Right to enjoy nothing in a Country, but what he enjoys by Law; and he has an equal Right to every thing that he so enjoys. And consequently every Deprivation of any thing which he enjoys by Law, is equally a Punishment in Kind, tho not in Degree. Now the Dissenters at present have a Capacity by Law, upon giving the Sacramental Security that they are not Popish Recusants, to hold any Place, which any other of their Peers, or Fellow-subjects of the same Rank and Station, can hold or enjoy. And they have at present as much Right to this Capacity, as to any part of their Property, or to their Capacity to take by Testament, &c.

And

And therefore to deprive them of the Capacity to hold a Place, is as much a Punishment in kind, as to deprive them of any of the other. And indeed it is greater than a Fine in degree : For Incapacitating a Man to receive the Profits of some Places, which Dissenters have at present a Capacity to receive, is a Punishment much more severe than the incapacitating them by a Fine to hold a smaller Part of their Property, which before they had a Capacity to enjoy. And tho every Citizen has not a Right as a Citizen to every Office, no more than he has a Right to every Legacy ; yet as every Citizen, as such, has at all times a Capacity to take a Legacy, and a Right to it, when it is bequeath'd him by Testament, according to a due Form of Law, till he forfeits it by some Offence : So every Citizen, as a Citizen, has at all times a Capacity, till he forfeits it, to hold an Office ; and a Right to hold it when it is confer'd upon him, according to the Method which the Law prescribes. No doubt when it is forfeited in either of the Cases, he may be depriv'd of it ; but then such a Deprivation must necessarily be allow'd to come under the Notion of a Punishment. This has been deny'd indeed by a late Author, but purely for want of distinguishing between the Capacity to hold an Office, and the actual Right to execute it. By confounding these two Idea's, his whole Argument becomes sophistical and faulty : And yet he builds a most malicious and a far-fetch'd Remark upon it, altogether unworthy of that better Temper, which appears in a great many other places of his Book.

*The Case of
the Toler.
recogniz'd.*

p. 17.

Thus far a Test, that incapacitates Dissenters to hold Places for going to separate Meetings, punishes them all ; but it will punish those much more severely, who will be thereby depriv'd of Offices which they actually possess. These Offices they hold by Law, as much as they hold their Estate, or any other Right which they enjoy. And as no Man can be depriv'd of any Right or any part of his Property, but under the notion of a Punishment ; so can no Dissenter be depriv'd of his Office but in the same way. And indeed the Punishment will be none of the mildest. I'm sure it will be more severe than the Fines of some late Reigns. For depriving the Dissenters of the Emoluments of some Places, is depriving them of more Money,

to

to which they have a Right at present, than the Fines did, which were levy'd by Acts made in the Reign of K. Charles II. And since that Author allows that to punish Men for worshipping God according to their Conscience, is Persecution; He and all the World must allow that the Test we have been discoursing of, is a Persecution in the strictest sense. Neither my time, nor a Pamphlet of this nature will allow me, to enter into a stricter examination of that Author's Argument. But I believe I have said enough to a Man of his good sense to convince him, and vindicate his Dissenter, whom he has prest to give up the Cause: As he must all, that have not leisure or capacity to consider what he advances. For it must be own'd, that Gentleman writes with uncommon strength and accuracy where his Cause will bear it, and with as much artifice where it won't.

By this it appears how hard such a Test will bear upon all who are possess'd of any sort of Offices: But how much harder will it press those, who are possess'd of any Offices, which they have bought? These Offices are Freeholds; and if affecting them for the sake of a Man's Conscience be not Persecution, nothing sure can be meant by that Word under Martyrdom or Imprisonment. And yet I fancy the greatest Strickler for this Test would be unwilling to stand to that sense of the Word in his own Case, as a Test of the thing it self. And Mulcts or Confiscation would go near to convince him, that this Signification of the Word was too restrain'd. These Offices, of which the Dissenters are to be stript by this Test, were purchas'd but under such Limitations as have been comply'd with: And how a new Limitation can be foisted in, after the Purchase is made, without Injustice, is above the Understanding of a Subject. There's no doubt indeed but the Government may impose any new Limitation for its own Security, without Injustice; but how such a Limitation, as only hinders Mens worshipping God in a Meeting, can be a Security to the Government, is as much out of the reach of a common Capacity as the former. And really since this new Limitation can be only design'd to limit Mens Consciences or their Interests, it requires a very metaphysical Head to distinguish it from an open Encroachment upon the Liberty of Conscience. The two Notions are in my mind so inseparably

connected, that nothing can divide them but the Slight of a Jesuit. This will be plain^r yet to any one who considers, that this Test will not only deprive Men of Places of Trust and Honour which they have bought, but of Places of meer Profit too. Now till Faggots should enlighten a Man's Understanding, or a Party of Apostolic Dragoons should be sent to convince him, one can hardly conceive what mighty Danger threatens the Government, if a Petty-Officer at the Custom-House goes to a Meeting. And pray then where's the Security the Government can receive by a Limitation, which should hinder him from frequenting 'em? Especially if care should not be taken at the same time to force him to go to worship God in a Church. This Consideration sets the thing in a true Light. It discovers the conceal'd Persecution, and the pretended Security of the Government, and makes all real Advantages to disappear. And if we yet farther add, that this new Limitation to which the Consciences of a great many of her Majesty's good Subjects, who have become Purchasers of these Places, can't submit, will deprive a great many of Places of Profit, which they have not only bought, but by which they and their Families entirely subsist; The Mask will be quite taken off. And I'm sure he must have a Jesuits Forehead as well as his Subtlety, who will pretend to deny, that, whatever be the Case of the rest of the Dissenters, when this Test shall take place, his Case will not come under the notion of a severe Persecution, who has only the Liberty to sin or to starve.

And now one would think the Hardships we have already mention'd enough in Conscience to convince any Man, that this Test will commence a Persecution; and yet he'll be confirm'd in the Opinion, if he add this Consideration to the former, That it will brand so many innocent sober Men with such Marks of Infamy and Disgrace. Reproach and Slander are, in the account of the Sacred Writers, some of the greatest Trials of our Christian Courage, and some of the highest Instances of our Militant State. And accordingly we are particularly forewarn'd, and commanded to be forewarn'd against 'em. Wherefore St. *Paul* gives them who stood the Shock of cruel Mockings, a place in that Glorious List of Worthys, that he gives us in his Epistle to the Hebrews.

Isaac

Isaac himself was one of these Passive Heroes, and suffer'd the Persecution of his Brother Ishmael, tho' he was neither punish'd with Stripes, nor Bonds, nor Fines, nor with the Fate which another young Martyr receiv'd from the Hands of an elder Brother. Reputation is a Blessing next in Rank to our Lives, and above that of Fortune. And a Punishment that tends to expose any Men, as Persons unfit for Society, is abundantly more severe than Fines and Amercements. And yet such will be the punishment and note of Distinction that this Test will put upon Dissenters; tho' none have shewn greater readiness to give the Government any assurances of Fidelity and Obedience. This Test is at once Pillorying all Dissenters: A Punishment much more severe than the Mulcts of the late Reigns; and e'en just as consistent with a Toleration: Which includes the lawfulness of the thing tolerated; whereas this Test punishes it by more Ways than one, and necessarily infers it a Transgression of a Law. To promise a Toleration in one Breath, and propose such a Test in the next; or to pretend to continue the one, while the other is introduc'd, is a Raillery altogether improper for a serious Assembly. Indeed it may chance to please some hardned malicious Spirits: but at the same time it must needs cut deep in a tender Conscience; and make the Dissenters, tho' never so averse to forms of Prayer, use it as a constant Litany; From such a Toleration good Lord deliver us!

However suppose, for once, a Dissenter furnish'd with a Stock of Stoicism, sufficient to keep him in temper, under these Reflections: Can it be thought he wou'd remain so, when he consider'd, that such a Proceeding had in all probability a further design, than the bare exclusion of Dissenters from Offices; and was an Engine brought upon the Stage, on purpose to repeal the Toleration? Which he must be very readily induc'd to believe. For since 'tis no ways safe nor prudent, to disoblige a Body of Men, without putting it out of their power to resent it; nor to attack the Toleration, but by lessening and weakning the number of those it tolerates; It will not be strange if he concludes, that when once that Game begins, and Resolutions are taken to weaken the Dissenters, their Extirpation is the thing intended. And will he not be confirm'd in this Opinion, when he sees the Test that shall be

calculated for this End and Purpose (by being such as shall only hinder Men in Office from going to Meetings) to be contriv'd like a Net, that will keep back the Dissenters from Offices, whilst it is large enough to let Libertines in Principle and Practice pass; lest it shou'd engage that sort of Men to combine with the Dissenters, who by an united Force might happily break it? For if it were meerly the Design to keep all ill Men out of Offices, and it were allow'd that the Dissenters were ill Men; yet a Test (that was to keep out ill Men, as such) ought not to be contriv'd to keep them out alone, unless they were the only ill Men, or the worst in the Kingdom. And by the way, tho' the Free-Thinkers of the Age, as they are pleas'd to stile themselves, may imagine, that a Test, that forbids Men in Office to go to Meetings, does not affect them in the least; yet that is the only Comfort that an honest Dissenter can take in such a Test, that after those Gentlemen have willingly seen the Dissenters in Office robb'd of the Liberty they justly enjoy, they'll quickly after find themselves depriv'd of the Liberties, which if they don't unjustly enjoy, one cannot but say they have manifestly abus'd.

These are shrewd Prejudices that something more is intend'd by this Test, than making an Inclosure of the Offices of England, for the benefit of the Church, and restraining the Dissenters from the advantage of Places, which before lay open to them with the rest of their Neighbours. When Alterations are on foot, and a Common is encroach'd upon and enclos'd, the next Field is not out of danger of being laid open; especially if the same Power, and as fair a pretence can be made for the one as for the other. 'Tis but a step from enacting a Law inconsistent with that of the Toleration, to the repealing the Act it self: And a Goal or a Halter is usually the Preferment that succeeds to the Pillory or the Cart; and is certainly the shortest way to secure ill men from doing mischief. Diverging those of Power who are the best Friends to a Toleration, and subverting the Constitution (which if the Reader will not take for granted, to be the effects of this Test at present, he shall have Demonstration for by and by) is but plucking up first the Stakes, and then the Hedg it self which is about the Liberty of Conscience, and which protects that sacred Exemption from the ravage of every wild Beast, and of every

every common Trespasser. And when this Fence shall be taken away, the Toleration has nothing but a bare Word for its Security. And tho there's not the least reason to imagine that there will ever be any occasion given to call the Religious observation of one Promise in question; yet there's as little reason to depend upon the Security of any other, after we have seen how light some have made of it themselves, who have pretended to a more than ordinary share of Reputation and Credit. So that it must be own'd that when ever this comes to be the case, the Toleration will stand upon a very narrow Bottom: And 'tis hard to believe (since to God and Wise men what is the Event in Act, is Design or Foresight) that 'tis not at present undermin'd. Her Majesty has declar'd, that she will exclude all Dissenters from Places, so that the Church has nothing to fear from 'em. But if this won't satisfy, and they must still be incapacitated by Law, and remov'd from the Legislative as well as the Executive Power of England, one would be ready to think that the Dissenters have every thing to fear from the Church. Now can any Dissenter see a Testiter on foot, which *does not only* appear to him *unkind, and ungrateful, partial and severe; neither procur'd by his Deserits, nor consistent with his Privileges; but which threatens the Liberty of his Conscience too*, the most valuable Blessing that the late happy Revolution could confirm to him; more valuable far than the Security of his Civil Liberties or Estate: Can any Dissenter, I say, see this, and not be disoblig'd? The Reader that can suppose it must go farther than a late Author, and not only deny a Dissenter the Reputation of the Protestant Religion but the Privilege of Humanity; and must suppose him to be something inferior to a Machine of Past-board, which complains and makes a Noise when you wound it, and not a Man of like Passions with himself. And indeed were all that made Pretensions to the Protestant Religion, Christians of that Author's size, I don't know whether any body would have reason to be angry with him for disputing them the Title.

Now it is a Maxim of all Governments to prevent any uneasiness in their Subjects, that would make them think of Alterations; and 'tis plain that those Governments are the most happy, which Oblige their Subjects, and engage 'em in their Interest.

*Prefat.
Discourse to
an Examination of
the Exposition of
the 39 Articles,
&c. p. 100.
Dr. Bincks
Sermon before the
Convocation,
Jan. 30.
1701.*

rest by a present Advantage, or the hopes of a future one. And we know some at no great distance, supported in a manner by the Assistance, that a careful regard to this Principle affords, against an infinite number of Pressures, that must otherwise have unavoidably sunk them. What then can make us think it for our Interest to take a quite contrary course? For it will appear from the nature of the thing, as well as from Experience, that Uneasiness under any Government unhinges a Man from that Government that makes him uneasy: And according to its different Degrees, and the different Passions that govern the uneasy Man, makes him either Useless or Prejudicial. If he be of the mildest Disposition, which carries him to extenuate an Injury, and his Uneasiness rises no higher than Jealousies and Suspensions, yet this Man will become useless. But if his Natural Temper carries him to Resent and Revenge, he is very likely to become *Dangerous*. For he's very likely to dread the Government, when he don't revere it: To fret and to complain, to sower his own Blood and taint his Neighbour's, and to carry things farther than a good Subject, and an honest Man ought. Love is the best Obligation to Duty, for 'tis Constant and Effectual: Whereas Fear can only make Men do their Task by halves, when their Master's Eye is over them; but can never make the Master secure, when his Back is turn'd.

The Dissenters have always been accounted Rebellious, by some, who would be thought the best Friends of the Church. Tho I think any body that casts but his Eye upon our History must allow, that if the Dissenters have outdone the Church in Principles of Rebellion, the Church has not come behind them in Practice. But if the Charge were true, it would appear from hence at whose door it must lie: Since they are the causes of the Rebellion, who provoke a Man to it. And after Men are injur'd, there's no way to obviate Revenge, but by disabling them to make any. So that it would be no better Policy to make the Dissenters uneasy, unless 'tis design'd to confiscate or banish them; than to strike a Man, and not to endeavour to put it out of his power to return the Blow. After the Edict of Nants was repeal'd, extirpating the Huguenots was absolutely necessary. Dissenters are considerable for their *Number*, as well as their Substance. Some who pretend to have considered the matter, compute them, according

to the most modest Computation, to bear the proportion of one to four. Would it be good Policy then to disoblige a fourth part of the People of England, and to shake them off from every dependance on the Government, but that of Dread and Fear? Would it be prudence to tempt them to *mermur* and repine, and some violent wicked Spirits perhaps to *what is worse*? And that at a time, when, to the great grief of every true English-man, People seem to be so universally jealous and apprehensive: When Love, the band of Society and Perfection, seems to be broken; and a great many of the Cords with which we had bound up our Leaky Vessel, burst asunder. Is this a time, when all Hands should be aloft, trimming the Sails, and managing the Pump, to employ a great many in cutting the Cords by which she hangs together, because a few ignorant or treacherous Mariners pretend they are rotten, and yet can produce no better, nor so good, to supply their place?

But I would not be mistaken. I don't say the Dissenters will ever carry it thus, and fret and repine against the Government, tho it should disoblige them; contrary to their avow'd Principles, and their peaceable Sufferings in some of the late Reigns. Nay, I must own that their Principles would engage 'em to perform the Duty that they owe to a Government (tho it should use 'em unkindly) for Conscience sake; committing their Cause quietly to God, to whom Revenge belongs: And that the Patience of their Tempers inur'd to Passive Obedience, and accusom'd to the Yoke from their Youth, would make a quiet submission to Hardships more easy to them, than to any others in their Case. Their Sufferings indeed may be represented as light and trivial at a distance: But they can't be thought so, if we would but cast our Eye back upon the Laws that were then made, or the manner of their Execution: Together with the Nature of the Offence to which those Penaltys were annex'd, and by whom they were both enacted and inflicted. These were aggravating Circumstances, and would have made any Men revenge the Injury, that had acted by that Principle, when it had been in their Power, as it was allow'd by all to have been in the Dissenters power, in the Reign of K. James *. But I am sure, notwithstanding all the peaceableness and patience of mens Tempers

*Case of
Toler. recogn.
* Marq. of
Hallif, Let.
of Adv. to
Dissent.
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rum's Re-
flections on
a Book cal-
led, The
Rights of
an Engl.
Convoc.
and p. 16.*

and Principles, till the Passive-Obedience-Mongers have argued Anger and Revenge out of human Nature, a Government should in good Policy, treat its Subjects as Men of Passions, and not as Men made up of Principles: And must expect, since Mens Passions are stronger than their Principles, that Severity will make Men forget their Principles, or contradict them. Or that if they should not, but should have Virtue enough to act above Revenge, that it is not the Interest of such a Government to give them an opportunity to exercise those Virtues, which must put that Government to the blush: And make the World confess, that instead of deserving severe Treatment, they were the Men (since they are truly great and fit to Rule, who are fit to Suffer) that are to be oblig'd with Offices of Trust; if it be the Decrees of Heaven, that it should ever maintain its Reputation and Honour. What I have said, that I may not be misunderstood, I'll sum up in these two Words, That he who should advise the Government to *make a Test*, that will *disoblige the Dissenters*, in hopes that they would *resent it*, designs ill to the *Security* of the Government: And that he who should do it, in hopes that they would *bear it with a Christian Patience*, is an Enemy to the *Reputation* of the Government, and to the Christian Faith.

Thus much therefore is plain upon the Supposition, that a Test that should bar Dissenters from Places would disoblige them, that it would *endanger the Government*. And I think it will appear yet much more plainly, that such a Test, if it should not ruin it, must necessarily *weaken it*, and tend to subvert the Constitution. For as to the first. Will it not *rob the Government of the Service of a great Body of Men*, who are as willing and as able to serve in the *Commissions* of Taxes, Peace and Lieutenancy; in the Bench of Aldermen and Assistants; in the Courts of Judicature, and Offices of State; or in Commands at Sea or Land, as any of their Fellow-Citizens? Will it not take all Dissenters out of our Navy, and keep them from lifting themselves for our Land-Service? Or is it to be expected, that any will undergo the Dangers and Fatigues of a common Souldier, or a Seaman who knows he can never receive any greater Reward than his common Pay? No, the same Answer, upon all accounts, must be expected from a Dissenter, if he should be ask'd to enter into her Majesty's

Majesty's Service, that the common People of Rome made,
 when they were desired to give their Names to the Service,
 after they had been ill us'd by the Patricians: "Let them
 fight the Battels [said they] of the Commonwealth, who
 share its Advantages. But since we are to have none of the
 "Emoluments of a War, we'll have none of its Dangers. Liv. l. 2.
 If such a Test as this had been in force under the last Govern-
 ment, had it not depriv'd it of the Assistance of some Dis-
 senters, in Places of the highest Importance, who discharg'd
 the great Trust repos'd in them, to the satisfaction of his late
 Majesty of ever-glorious Memory, and to the Shame and Si-
 lence of their Enemies? Had it not depriv'd the City lately,
 and when this Bill was first contriv'd, of a Lord Mayor, who Sir Tho.
 by the universal Consent of all Men was thought to give a Pat- Abney.
 tern to all that should succeed him? Such was the Impartiality
 and Wisdom of his Administration, the Courtesy of his Be-
 haviour, and the Order and Magnificence of his Oeconomy
 and Entertainments. And would it not have eclips'd the
 Glory of her present Majesty's Government, by having ren-
 der'd his Royal Highness Prince George of Denmark incapable
 of that High Trust, which he has executed to the great Ho-
 nour of the Nation, in the Protection of our Trade, and the
 signal Victory that we have so lately obtain'd? These are so
 many irrefragable Instances, that frequenting other Places to
 worship God has not render'd Men incapable of ser-
 ving their Country in Fact; and that consequently, if
 it had render'd them incapable in Law, it had drawn
 away that Strength and Vigor from the Government,
 which has contributed to make it reach its great Designs
 at home, and to preserve it a Terror to its Enemies a-
 broad.

Thus you'll incapacitate all Dissenters for Offices: And
 when you have done that, you need not do any thing more
 to *incapacitate them* from bearing a part in the *Legislature*. For
 when they shall no longer be in Commissions in the Countys,
 nor of the Bench in the Citys and Boroughs of England; their
 Interest in those, whom they are to represent, which depends
 in a greater measure upon their Power and Authority than their
 Capacity and Merit, must necessarily sink and fall. Now one
 must either suppose that the Dissenters are really incapable of

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being

being useful in that Honourable Body, or that the excluding them must be very prejudicial. But what Man or Party can have the impudence to deny, that the House of Commons have receiv'd the greatest Assistance from the accuracy and diligence of some Persons and Families, that dissent from the Church of England; and who are not less considerable for their Interest in their own Countys and in Parliament, than for their Capacity of using it, to the Service of the Nation? I have known Dissenters, who in their greatest Intimacys have not only assur'd me, but given me convincing Reasons to believe, that it is no more for their Interest, than it is in their Power to subvert the Church. This Principle must keep these Men from being dangerous in that great Assembly: And would not their Interest, which is known to be so closely connected with the Libertys of England, and the Moderation of the Church, render these Men the most highly useful in an Assembly, design'd to be the Rampart of the Libertys of England, against any Encroachments of the Crown, which the Mitre has but too generally endeavour'd to support? The Instance of Mr. Alderman Love is very much to our present purpose, who, tho a noted Dissenter, was the most zealous in the Long Parliament, in opposing the Liberty, that K. Charles the Second had given to the Dissenters, by suspending all Penal Laws about them, in a Declaration bearing date *March 15. 167 $\frac{1}{2}$* : Declaring he had much rather still go without that desir'd Liberty, than have it in a way, that must at the same time ruin the rest of the Libertys of his Country. And he was the great Instrument in getting the King's Declaration voted Illegal.

An. 1673.

But there are yet other *ways* by which the Dissenters are of *more general Service*, and in those too this Test makes them *useless*. It cuts them off from the Body, and hinders them from performing any Ministry to the whole. For is it to be expected that they should give any Assistance to those, that they think would use it to make them miserable? And thither all Uneasiness tends, in a greater or a less degree. I confess if the Dissenters were all of them an inconsiderable parcel of People, poor and ignorant, without Interest or Influence; Their being in the Interest of the Society, could do us no service; nor their being separated from it, any hurt. But since

a great many of the Dissenters are Men of Sense and Substance, considerable by their Monys vested in Trade, and the share they have in the Lands of England; and who, with the Assistance of the Government, cou'd make a considerable Interest for its Support: It wou'd be worth the while to consider, whether any of the little Ends, that the Enemys of the Dissenters should propose by disobliging them, cou'd counter-balance the loss of *their Direction and their Purse*. To make the Dissenters unconcern'd for the Commonweal, is discharging so many private Sentinels, that are generally the first that take and give the Alarm of any Dangers that threaten us; and it's a forcing them to withdraw the Supplys they used to afford.

The ready Subscriptions of Mony to the Government, was the most melancholy prospect the French King had, during the late War. For it was a certain sign, that while our Will was good, our Treasure was not to be exhausted. And tho there is more Blood in the Body now, than there was during some of the last Years of the late War, when Flanders drew away so considerable a part of our Nourishment; yet if the Government should cut off the Dissenters from all hopes of Protection, Favour or Preferment, possibly it wou'd find that one of her main Arterys was cut, which us'd to bring her Exchequer a constant Supply. We should learn then who were the Men that advanc'd Mony during the late War with that readiness and ease, which could always support our Credit, revive us under our greatest Discouragements, and damp our Enemys in the midst of their Success. 'Tis in vain to think, that the Dissenters, if they once come to be jealous of a Design against them, will ever be tempted by the little Baits of Discounts and Interests, to assist any Persons to ruin them. Self-preservation, which no other Principle can stifle or resist, will keep them from lending a Sword to any that they suspect will turn its Point upon the Men that lent it. And if once our Subscriptions shall come to fail, France will not have much to fear. But, there is the less need to insist on this, since we have been convinc'd more than once, how the remotest Attempts of this nature have affected the Public Credit.

Since then it appears in many Instances, and in the nature of the Thing, that Dissenters may be useful Members of the Society,

Feb. 16.
1667.

ciety, to what end are they to be cut off? The Strength and Order of a Country consists in the Number of sober useful Inhabitants: And to rob it of such Inhabitants, or to ty up their hands from doing Service, is the highest Treachery any can be guilty of. 'Tis like that barbarous Surgeon, who having another in his Power, and finding himself unsuspected, should cut off a sound or useful Member, to ruin or enervate a Body, committed to his care to corroborate and preserve. *Augustus* in one of his most tender Minutes, and when he was affected with the greatest concern for his Country; observing that the dissolute Lives of the Equestrian Order, hinder'd the encrease of Rome, told them, "That they were guilty of Murder, Impiety, and Sacrilege, and had blended such a variety of Crimes together, that he knew not what Names to give them or their Wickedness. What would he then have said if they had depopulated a Country well inhabited; or, which is the same thing, if they had rendred those Inhabitants meer Burdens of the Earth, useless and unserviceable? I cannot sum up what I have said, both upon the Disadvantage and Danger that will accrue to England by disobliging the Dissenters, better than in K. Charles the Second's words to his Parliament, after he had seen the Effects of Persecution; "Where he recommends to them seriously to think of some course to beget a better composure in the Minds of his Protestant Subjects in Matters of Religion, whereby they might be induced, not only to submit quietly to the Government, but also cheerfully to give their Assistance to it. To this Opinion of his, and to what has been said upon these Heads, the Resolution made in that entirely Protestant House of Commons, who sent up the Exclusion Bill, upon the Penal Laws, is very pertinent; which tho it indeed relates immediately to them, is by an equitable construction as referable to this new Test. "Resolved, that it is the Opinion of this House, That the Prosecution of Dissenters upon the Penal Laws (it will be as true of any other Penal Laws or Hardships, as of those that were then in being) is at this time grievous to the Subject, a weakening of the Protestant Interest, an Encouragement to Popery, and dangerous to the Peace of the Kingdom.

But possibly 'twill be said that, The Effect of this Test will be only like the eating away proud Flesh, that better may come in its room. Very likely so in truth: For sober diligent conscientious Men, and who hold no Principles dangerous to the Constitution, are indeed very ill Members of a Society: And on the other hand Non-Abdicators, Non-Affociators, and Non-Jurors are much more useful Men to some certain Purposes than Non-Conformists. And when the latter must be kept out, there will be so many Vacancys, that the others must of necessity be put in, and continued to supply their place. Then the hopes of the Golden Age will begin to revive the drooping Spirits of a great many good Men, who had fainted, if they had not lived to see this fair prospect of Salvation; by seeing those Gentlemen fill the Offices of England, who never qualified themselves by Civil Tests (the very thing they unjustly blame the Dissenters for, in that of a Religious one) till Honour or Advantage, or it may be the Designs of greater Service engaged them to take their Swear, as they are pleased to phrase it: Who were against the Abdication of the late K. James, the Association to support K. William, and the Abjuration of the pretended Prince of Wales, in order to maintain her Majesty's unquestionable Right to the Throne, and the Succession in the Protestant Line.

But further: Incapacitating Dissenters, will not only weaken this happy Government, by removing a great many of its Props and Supports at the present; but *subvert the Foundation on which 'tis built.* Every one knows that the English Constitution consists of the Prerogatives of the Crown, and the Libertys of the People. Now 'tis certain that this Constitution can only be preserv'd by a Ballance of Power, or of Inclination. That is, to explain my self, either by a Power in the Crown, as able to maintain its Prerogative, if the People should have an Inclination to invade it; as the People have to maintain their Privileges, if the Prince should have an Inclination to retrench them: Or if the Crown has not a power to maintain its Rights, equal to the power the People have to maintain theirs; then the Prerogative of the Crown must subsist, either by taking away an Inclination from all the People of invading the Prerogative (which is hardly possible) or from such a part of them, as may oppose others that have such

a Design. And the latter is all that the Crown can do here to its own preservation. For since the Queen's Lands are not considerable, nor her Tenants many; Since her Revenues are not great, nor her Domesticks numerous, nor her Officers of State independent on the People; Since she can neither raise nor borrow Money without the Consent of Parliament: The Crown has no native or internal Power (as it has in absolute Monarchys) to preserve it self; but depends upon an Inclination in a Majority of the People (as the Crown of Israel did) to maintain it.

The People on the contrary have an internal Power by their Number, Property and ready Money, to maintain their own Privileges against any usurpation. So that the Case of the Prince and the People are just opposite: For as the Prerogative has an inward inability to maintain its self, and depends upon a Foreign Inclination; the People have an inherent Power to maintain their Libertys; which can be injur'd by nothing but an Inclination in a part of their own Body to betray 'em, in order to enlarge those of the Crown. So then: As the Security of the Crown (as we remark'd but just now) depends upon this, that no Body of Men superior to the rest, shou'd have an Inclination to rob the Prerogative; so the Security of our Libertys depends upon this, that no Body of Men superior to the rest should have an Inclination to betray those Libertys, in order to enlarge the Prerogative of the Crown. By this time I promise my self, I have sufficiently explain'd the meaning of a *Ballance of Power*, and of *Partys or Inclination*. And I hope it will not be taken amiss: For when we know that the Sphere of our Libertys, and the Prince's Prerogative, are not preserv'd like two Globes, supported by proper Pedestals, able to bear their own weight; but rather like two of Des Cartes's Whirlpools, by having either an equal and necessary Power to preserve themselves, or an equal Power by accident to hinder mutual Destruction, we shall, it may be, take more proper Methods to preserve them.

This by the way. But to return: An Inclination to preserve the Prerogative of the Crown depends upon such Principles as these; That it is as much the lawful Right of the King, and as much for the Interest of England, for the Prince to
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enjoy his Privileges (which are call'd the Prerogative) as 'tis for the People to enjoy theirs. And an Inclination in the People to preserve their Rights, depends upon such Principles as these: That a King is a Minister of God, made to rule by the Consent of the People, upon condition that he shall preserve the People in their Rights and Privileges; and forfeit their Allegiance when he breaks them. On the other side, an Inclination in the People to give up their own Rights, and to enlarge the Prerogative of the Crown, depends upon such Principles as these: That Kingly Power is of Divine Right: That it can be transmitted only by a descent in the Right Line: And that when it is so transmitted, there can be no Abuse in its Exercise, for which the King can be accountable, or which the People ought not quietly to bear.

If things then be thus, we need no more, to come to a certain knowledge of what is the Ballance of England; and whether a Test which weakens the Dissenters, tends to preserve or destroy it; than to know who are the Men to whom these Principles respectively belong: And that is not hard to determine. The Whigs, of which the Dissenters have always made a considerable part (and with whom that Interest is so closely connected and interwoven, that it can't fail to share the same fate) have been the Men noted for their Popular Principles, and for having always acted suitably thereto. They have been a firm Rampart to the Libertys of the People against all the Assaults of Arbitrary Power; and have so heartily oppos'd the Designs of ill Reigns, as to get the Names of Commonwealths-men: But who to shew that they were thoro' Friends to our Constitution, and were for defending the Prerogative vested in a good Prince, who they knew would use it to their Advantage, and who deserv'd Marks of their Gratitude, for the great Deliverance he had wrought, have gone so far on the obliging side in the late Reign, as to be term'd Apostates and Courtiers, in reproach. So that to contract the whole of this matter into as narrow a compass as we can, that it may be seen at one view, you may take this Abstract of the Demonstration. If the preservation of the Ballance or Constitution of England depends upon a preservation of the Prerogative on the one hand, and the Libertys of the People on the other: If moreover the Prerogative can't be
pre-

preserv'd, nor the Libertys of the People destroy'd (which are the only Alterations we can fear) but by an Inclination in the People to preserve the one, and to give up the other: If moreover these Inclinations to preserve the one, and not to give up the other, depend upon Popular Principles; and the Whigs are the Men noted for those Principles, and a steady Practice conformable thereto: And if last of all, the Dissenters are known to be the Men, with whom the Whig Interest must rise and fall: It is certain, that to weaken the Dissenters, is to destroy the Ballance of England.

Or if you will, you may view the Demonstration in this Light. No Government can be happy but by one of these three ways: Either by *Wholesom Orders*, *Good Men*, or *Cautious ones*. Wholesom Orders make Legislators and Magistrates both Wise and Honest. Legislators and Magistrates that are both Wise and Honest, render such Orders needless by their Wisdom and Honesty. And those that are cautious, do the same thing by their Craft and Fear. Lacedemon is an instance of the first sort; who by the meer Mechanism of her Rules made it in a manner impossible for any part of the Legislative or Executive Power to do amiss. Rome in its Infancy, and under her Consuls, is an Instance of the second; who without the help of good Orders, by the meer Virtue and Strength of Genius, that was so notorious in her Senators and Magistrates, rais'd her self to be the Envy of her own, and the Admiration of future times. Our own Country may serve as an Instance of the third: Where I think 'tis beyond dispute, that our Constitution does not determine the Actions of Legislators, Magistrates and Ministers, by any Mechanical Oeconomy, which can make Knaves honest, and Fools wise; but leaves room for 'em, to shew themselves in their proper Colours: And sure we cannot be so vain, as to brag of our Race at present. It must be own'd that the Heroic Virtue that might support us by its own force, and give a tincture to all that we do, has been spent some Years ago.

Since then we cannot depend upon Mens Inclinations to be honest, we must depend upon their Fear of being otherwise. That Fear is only to be rais'd and supported by the view of a Power that is able to call them to an account. But when the far greater part of the Legislature, Magistracy and Ministry,
shall

shall act by the same Notions and Inclinations, who will they then fear as their Check? And yet 'tis evident, that both the Check and all Regard to him will vanish and disappear, when either of the Partys which are now pretty even, come to be weaken'd or destroy'd. The Constitution of England consists in a Ballance of Partys, as the Libertys of Europe do in a Ballance of Powers. We find to our Cost that they are not to be maintained by meer Treatys; nor by the Honor of Sovereign Princes, and their want of Inclination to invade them: But that they are supported and preserv'd by keeping every Government in such Circumstances, as to be afraid to undermine the Libertys of Europe, or openly to attack them, lest the rest call them to account. But as when we suffer any Power in Europe to become exorbitant, and out of the reach of the Rest, we destroy the Libertys of Europe: So when we allow one of the Partys in England to be above the Check of the other, we must bid farewell to its Libertys too. These are Maxims and Principles which we have had but too much occasion of late to examine, and less Reason to question, since we have examined them: So that 'tis impossible they should be forgot. And I hope they will not fail to be apply'd to a Case, where they are so pertinent and useful.

And if we may be allowed to look *Abroad*, let us see what Consequences this Test must have there. We have at present a Treaty on foot for the uniting England and Scotland, and for the making that but one Government, which Nature has made but one Island. The Treaty has been recommended with that earnestness from the Throne, both by her present Majesty, and her Glorious Predecessor, and has been comply'd with so readily by both Houses of Parliament, and so far proceeded in on both sides, that whatever becomes of the Success, the Design ought to appear to be serious. And sure the Honour and Dignity of the Government, and the Care of a future good Understanding with that Neighbour Country, should engage us to avoid every thing (unless it were resolv'd to venture all to mortify Presbyterians) that should give the least Suspicion of such a Treaty's being ludicrous and collusive. I'm sure a Comprehension would be very consistent with the Scheme of an Union, and would con-

vince the Scots we were in earnest. I wish the Rule of Contraries may for once prove false ; and that straitning the Sacramental Test, and cramping the Dissenters mayn't be inconsistent with the Union, as 'tis with a Comprehension. If we travel but a little farther from home, and view the Reference of our Isle to the Continent, we shall find it has the Honour to be apply'd to, as the Head of the Confederacy, and the Protectress of the Libertys of Europe. But when she has lost her own Libertys, or endangered them, is she like to remain in the same Consideration ? No, 'tis for Free Governments to become the Patrons of the Oppressed. But a Country that has lost her own Libertys, will never have the honor to restore or maintain those of her Neighbours. And her Neighbours, we may depend upon it, will be wiser, than to do her the Honor, of suing for that, which it will not be in her power to give.

On the other hand, when we consider the Dependance we have upon the Continent, as well as the Dependance the Continent has upon us ; we find, to our great Satisfaction, that we have Alliances with the Dutch, the King of Prussia, and some other Presbyterians of Germany. But is it likely that they should repose any great Confidence in us, if we persecute their known Friends, and the Men of their Stamp and Profession ? Can they suppose that we can bear any good Will to Presbyterian Allies, when we shew so little to Presbyterian Subjects ? Such a Supposition in them would be Fondness and not Policy. For since the peaceable Subjection of the Presbyterians, and their readiness to serve the Government, won't free them from the Government's Displeasure : Can our Foreign Allies suppose their Service or Alliances can secure them against the like Displeasure, when occasion serves ? It was argu'd I remember a few Years since, when a Bill for disinheriting Popish Heirs was upon the stocks, that we ought not to deal severely with the Papists, because it would beget a misunderstanding in our Popish Allies : But I suppose our refin'd Politicians will be able to find out some Disparity in the case of Presbyterians. It was said too, that a Complaint being made against some Persons, by a Roman Catholic, for forwarding that Bill, They excus'd themselves upon this account, that in all likelihood it would break the Confederacy with

our Roman Catholic Allies: Upon which Reply, he went away pretty easy under the Hardship. If this be true, and the thing at that time was I remember very confidently reported, and generally believ'd, there may be some other effect of this Test, besides breaking in upon Hypocrisy. In the mean while, by all that we have said upon this Head, it appears, how such a Test as this must affect our *Credit, Alliances, and the Ballance of Europe*, as well as our own true Poize and *Constitution*. And after I have named that, 'twere a Folly to say any thing more upon the fatal Consequences of such a Test. Our *Religion and Liberty*; Our *Property and Trade*; Our *Peace and Credit*; The *Integrity of Our Councils*; The *Administration of Justice*, and the *Success of Our Arms*: And to say no more, Our *happy Establishment under a Protestant Queen, and the Succession in a Protestant Line*, are all built upon our Constitution, and can't fail to share the Fate of the Foundation which supports them.

And thus I have dispatch'd the first Consideration; What is the Interest of the Government of England. Let us now consider what is the *Interest of the Church*. And for God's sake, Brethren of the Church of England, do you consider it well yourselves: Lay aside Prejudice and Passion: Forget old Quarrels, and little Piques of a later date: Bring a Mind willing to be convinc'd and reconciled: And then tell me, Whether it can be for the *Reputation of a Christian Church*, whose Duty it is to represent the Meekness and Forbearance, the Gentleness and the Kindness of our Common Lord in all her Proceedings, to use her Interest with the Government to treat the Dissenters with Severity, who are of the same Body, and have the same Spirit, and are call'd in one and the same hope of our Calling; having one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all. Will this Carriage recommend Religion, and be a convincing Proof, that that good Spirit of Christ guides you, whose Presence alone makes your Acts to have any Force or Authority? Or can it be an Instance of your Kindness, to deprive your Brethren, the Dissenters, of the Advantages, to which their Birth gives them as just a Title as any you can lay claim to; and which by consequence they ought equally to share? Can a Design to engross the Advantages of the Society, when you bear but a part of its Burdens, proceed

ceed from that Wisdom that is from above, which is kind, gentle, peaceable, easy to be intreated, and which is equally free from Partiality and Hypocrisy? Or has it not rather that Selfishness, whose Property it is to seek its own things, and not the things of another, which discovers it to be of a lower Original? And tho some Men heated by fighting Prizes in Divinity, and blinded by the Dust they raise, may fondly imagine, that such a Proceeding will be taken for a just Temporal Discipline (a thing foreign to the design of the Gospel) that ought to be us'd to reclaim Schismatics; yet will not others, that are in a better position to see Truth than they, when they consider how little of Spiritual Censure the Church of England uses to her corrupt Members, rather think such a Severity to be Opiniativeness and Obstinacy, and an effect of Heat and Passion, than any true Discipline us'd towards Members that are cut off, in order to restore them? For will it be possible for you to maintain that Reverence and Esteem in the Minds of Men, that belongs to you and to your Ecclesiastical Censures, when you commit the Error *, you have confest the Artifice of the Papiists had led you into in the late Reigns, in the Severitys you used to the Dissenters? and in breaking the Promise you have so often made to come to a † better Temper, and never to be guilty of the same mistake again? Or

* *Bp. Stillingfleet's Charge to his Clergy at his first Visitation*, p. 49.

An Apology for the Church of England with relation to the Spirit of Persecution with which she is accused, p. 6.

† The Bishops in their Petition to K. James assure him, that their unwillingness to read his Declaration, did not proceed from any want of Duty and Obedience to his Majesty, nor from any want of due Tenderness to Dissenters, in relation to whom they were willing to come to such a Temper, as should be thought fit, when that matter should be considered. And in their Advice to the said King, they desire his Majesty to issue out Writs for a Free and Regular Parliament, in which the Church of England might be secur'd according to the Act of Uniformity, and Provision made for a due Liberty of Conscience.

And in the account of that Advice, entituled, *An Account of the late Proposals made by the Archbishop, with some other Bishops to his Majesty*, in a Letter to M. B. Esq; the Author has this Passage: I do assure you, and I am certain I have the best grounds in the whole World for my Assurance, that the Bishops will never stir one jot from their Petition; but that they will, whenever

Or rather, will not this Procedure procure you those Characters, which it will be equally scandalous for others to give, or for you to deserve?

But further, Brethren, supposing your Reputation be out of the Case, can it be for your Safety, to do any thing that shall weaken this Government, under which our Religion is protected, and upon which the Reformation does depend? Is it consistent with your Security, to use your Endeavours to split the Protestant Interest into Partys, and to widen the Breach, when 'tis attacked by the Devil, heading an Army of Deists, and

wer that happy Opportunity shall offer it self, let the Protestant Dissenters find, that they will be better than their Word given in their famous Petition.

In an Apology for the Church of England, with relation to the Spirit of Persecution, with which she is accus'd : *The Reverend Author speaking of the Clergy of the Church of England, says, Their Piety and Virtue, and the Prospect that they now have of suffering themselves, put us beyond all doubt as to their Sincerity : and if ever God in his Providence brings it [the Church of England] again into a settled State, out of the Storms into which our Passion and Folly, as well as the Treachery of others, have brought us ; it cannot be imagin'd that the Bishops will go off from those Moderate Resolutions, which they have now declared : And they continuing firm, the weak and indiscreet Passions of any of the inferior Clergy must needs vanish, when they are under the Conduct of wise and worthy Leaders. And I will boldly say this, That if the Church of England, after she has got out of this Storm, will return to hearken to the Peevishness of some four Men, she will be abandon'd both of God and Man, and will set both Heaven and Earth against her : The Nation sees too visibly how dear the Dispute about Conformity has cost us, to stand any more upon such Punctilio's. And those in whom our Deliverance is wrapt up, understand this Matter too well, and judge too right of it, to imagine that ever they will be Prielstridden in this Point. So that all Considerations concur to make us conclude there is no danger of our splitting a second time upon the same Rock. And indeed if any Argument were wanting to compleat the Certainty of this Point, the wise and generous Behaviour of the main Body of the Dissenters in this present Juncture, has given them so just a Title to our Friendship, that we must resolve to set all the World against us, if we can ever forget it, and if we do not make them all the returns of Ease and Favor when it is in our Power to do it.*

The Bishop of Sarum in his Reflections on a Book concerning the Rights of an English Convocation, gives us a very full Account of the Promises the Church of England made in King James's Reign : For, says he, The Bishops in the former Reign had in that Petition, upon which they suffered so gloriously,

and practical Atheists at home, and a Confederacy of Papists abroad? Shall the Zeal of propagating Heresy join separate Interests, and unite the Heads of distant Countrys; And shall not a holy Fear of their Success, and a pious Resolution to resist it, cement us; when by having the Place of our Nativity common to us both, we have a common Interest, and a common End to pursue? Or is an endeavour to disoblige the Dissenters, the way either to unite and strengthen us at home; or to obtain that better correspondence with the Protestants abroad, which you have profest to be your Interest, and your Resolution, * in the time of your distress? May

riously, expressed a readiness to come to a just Temper in all the Matters of difference among us, when they should be brought before them in Convocation or Parliament. And among other Messages that were sent over to the King, being then Prince of Orange; one was, that he would use all his Interest among the Dissenters, to hinder them from running into the Declaration, and to the Design that was then promoted of animating them against the Church. *Of this (says he) I may be allowed to speak confidently, because it passed through my own Hands; and I drew the Directions that were given to an Eminent Person, who was employed in it. Upon these Reasons it was, that the Prince promised in his Declaration, with which he came over, that he would use his Endeavours to bring about the so-much desired Union, between the Church of England and the Dissenters. So their Majestys were under Engagements to make the Experiment.*

Whence it plainly appears, that the endeavouring to unite the Church and the Dissenters, for which the late King and Queen, of ever glorious Memory, have been thought too great Favourers of the Dissenters, was as much the Bishops act, as theirs: Only with this difference, that the Bishops mov'd it in their Afflictions, and they and the Clergy drew back upon their deliverance; and that their Majestys were true to their Word, after God had blest them with Success.

Most of these Citations the Judicious Mr. Calamy has made, in that Abridgement of Mr. Baxter's Life, with which he has lately oblig'd the World. But they were so necessary here, that I could not pass them by.

* The Marquis of Halifax, in his Letter of Advice to Dissenters, says, that *All former haughtiness towards the Dissenters, was for ever extinguished; and that the Spirit of Persecution was turned into a Spirit of Peace, Charity and Condescension; that the Church of England was convinced of its Error in being severe to them. And all thinking Men were come to a general Agreement, no more to cut themselves off from the Protestants abroad, but rather enlarge the Foundations, upon which we are to build our Defences against the Common Enemy.*

you not justly expect, if you forget or contradict the Resolutions you made in your Sufferings, when Men generally consider most, and think best; that God for his own Honor, and the Honor of your Protestant Church, will repeat those Afflictions, to bring you to the same happy Temper again? For God's sake, Brethren, let us not provoke the Lord our God, for he is a jealous God; but the rather one another to Condescension, and to Peace.

And indeed if you will but give your selves leave to reflect, Interest as well as Duty, will solicit you to entertain such Designs of Kindness and Moderation. For, has the Church of England more to fear from the Dissenters, who agree with her in 36 of her Articles, and differ from her but in three; than she has from Atheists and Deists, who disown 'em all, and the Holy Books in which they are contain'd? Or is she in more danger from Nonconformists, who are incorporated with her into several Societys, to support the Credit of Religion; and were never particularly blam'd for betraying it, by an ill Life and Practice; than from those Libertines, who disown all Religion in Fact, and expose it to contempt? Or to be free, has the true and antient Church of England more to fear from Dissenters, who often join with her in worshipping their common Lord; than from those Gentlemen, who in one breath say that all Schismatics (and such they say are all those who have left the Center of Union) are out of all ordinary means of Salvation; and that consequently they had rather be Papists than Schismatics; and in the next inveigh against the Government, for deposing *A—p S—n—t*, and against the Church, from falling from that Center of Union (suppos'd to be the Corner-stone of the Building) and immediately retire from her Communion (I suppose as Schismatical) to Conventicles of their own? If not, and it appear that the Church of England is in greater danger from the Enemys of Religion, and of the Government; and from some of her violent Friends, who subvert her Constitution, whilst they pretend to put her upon a better Foundation; than she is in from the Dissenters, who stand upon the same bottom, and only differ in the Plainness and Simplicity of the Superstructure: Then certainly 'tis not only against the *Reputation and Safety*, but highly for the *Interest* of the Church of England, to incorporate their Strength with

The Interest of England,

with her own, that she may withstand the better the Designs of her Enemys. And indeed the Dissenters will sooner or later be found the Ballance of Religion as well as of the Civil Constitution. But if notwithstanding all that can be said, the Church of England will remain of the Opinion, that the Dissenters are her Enemys: For God's sake, since they are less dangerous than the rest, let her reserve her Endeavours to weaken them till the last.

But perhaps it will be objected, That all that has been said is to no purpose; since all my Arguments are built upon the Supposition, that a Negative Test, obliging all Persons in Office to forbear going to a Meeting, will disoblige the Dissenters, and turn them out of their Places: Whereas either the Dissenters cannot expect Places without complying with this Test; or there's no doubt, since they have not boggled at receiving the Sacrament in the Church of England to save their Places, but for the same reason they will be brought to comply: and that in either case it cannot be said that they will be *disoblig'd*. Thus it seems for a Dissenter to expect a Place is Impudence, and to Qualify himself for one is Hypocrisy. This is the two-edged Sword of some Spirits amongst us, forg'd for Mischief, and Slaughter, by which the Dissenters are to be divided from their Places, themselves to be sacrific'd, and the secrets of their Hearts to be reveal'd. But a little Consideration will take off the Edge of this Weapon, and render it harmless and inoffensive. For to the first part of the Objection, which represents the Dissenters as Impudent and Unreasonable to expect Places, upon the Supposition that they are unqualify'd, till they comply with this Test; It may be reply'd, that Capacity and Integrity to discharge the Duty of a Place, and Fidelity to the Government, under whom 'tis enjoy'd, being the only qualifications in any Man in Office, requisit in the Nature and Reason of the thing it self, it can never be unreasonable in the Dissenters to expect a Place, without having any other, till it can be prov'd that Dissenting deprives 'em of these necessary qualifications: Tho it may be unjust and partial in a Government to impose any other, and seditious in the Subjects by violent and illegal Methods to prevent their Imposition. However I am apt enough to believe that there may be Impudence on one side or other. And since

'tis

'tis not on theirs who expect Places, I am not sure that 'tis not on theirs who deny the Dissenters any right to enjoy 'em. 'Tis plain they have an Equitable Right : And then one would think it should not be for the Reputation of the Government to say, that Right is restrain'd by Law. Yet some have been so lavish of their own Reputation and of that of the Government, as to venture to assert, that the Test Act restrains Dissenters from Places, and requires a Qualification in all that are in Office, which is not contain'd under those, we have just now mention'd.

I am sure the Time, the Occasion, the Title, the Preamble, and the Enacting part of that Act, do plainly evince, that the Qualification it requires is not to be a Conformist, but a Protestant: It was simply design'd to restrain Popish Recusants, and not other Dissenters; and to be a Security to the Protestant Religion in general, and not to the Church of England in particular. It was chiefly level'd at the D. of York, who had too much Interest with some Men, that wou'd fain be thought the only Church Men, and the only true Protestants: Whilst he had none at all with others, who are hardly allow'd to deserve either of those Titles. Now he must have a more than ordinary share of Discernment and Penetration, who shou'd pretend that tho the Dissenters are not restrain'd by the Letter or Equity of that Act, yet they were design'd to have been restrain'd by the Lawgivers: Since it wou'd have been very extraordinary, if a Statesman, whom K. Charles II. thought to have more Divinity than all the Bishops, and more Law than all the Judges, shou'd have so mistaken his design, as to procure a Test to cramp the Dissenters, to whom he was known to have very favourable Intentions: Or if one of his great reach, and hearty concern to the Protestant Interest, shou'd have so overshot his Mark, as to injure the Dissenters, by a Law for the Security of the Protestant Religion, when he has been often heard to say, they had been its Protection, and its Lifeguards; and were the first who took and gave the Alarm of any danger with which it was threatened. Thus the known Opinions of that great Politician who introduc'd the Sacramental Test, and the Design of the Act it self by which 'twas introduc'd, both concur to evince beyond dispute, that it was only done, because the Insignificancy of Oaths and all other the most Sacred Tys, had convinc'd our Lawgivers that nothing under the Sacramental Security cou'd protect the Of-

The F. of Shaftsbury.

fices of England from the Invasion of Papists, and because it was known, that it would not exclude the Generality of Protestant Dissenters, who were wont to communicate Occasionally with the Church, long before that Test was thought on. If it had been the Design of that Act, to have restrained both Papists and Dissenters, as some would insinuate, who out of their great Charity take all Occasions to couple them together; they would have made constant Conformity the Qualification. But since they did not make that a Qualification, which was the only one that could restrain Dissenters, and only constituted the other; because it was the only Qualification, that it was thought could restrain Papists: It's past doubt, that the Test Act was only brought in as an Expedient, to secure us from the ill Services of the one, whilst it should not prevent the Usefulness of the others.

But if the Government thinks fit to restrain the Offices of England, to Men of Capacity, Integrity and Loyalty, by any other Limitations than those in being: Or if the Wisdom of the Nation should think a farther Security for the Fidelity of Men in Office necessary; or that any Jealousys about the Loyalty of the Dissenters ought to be satisfy'd, and some new Assurances given of their steddiness to the present Establishment; let a Test be fram'd to answer these Ends, and let them be taken for the disaffected Party, who are the first that complain and refuse to comply. The Protestant Dissenters desire no Quarter, if they scruple the giving any Security, that the Government should think fit to require, touching their Opinion of her Majesty's indisputable Right to the Crown, or their own Obligations to maintain it in her present Majesty, and in the Protestant Line. They are willing their Qualifications for Places should be try'd by Declarations and Promissory Oaths to abhor and abjure all Rivals and Pretenders to the Throne, and to the Succession; and all violent and illegal Methods to make any Alteration in Church or State. Nay, they are willing that their Resolutions to serve the present Establishment and the future Succession, should not only be try'd by their Oaths and Declarations, but by the warmth of their Prayers for this happy Government, and the Loyalty of their Sermons, and even by their common Talk, where Nature may be thought to have more power, and to be less disguis'd and over-ru'd by Consideration and Design, than in complying
with

with Public Oaths, and other State-Securitys. By such Tests as these then let our nursing Mother testify her Care, in disposing of Places to the Advantage of the Nation, and discern the Duty and Affection of her Children, and know where her Bounty and Favour, as well as her Protection and Indulgence will be rightly plac'd. But God forbid that our gracious Queen should take the Counsel of the hotter Spirits among the Clergy, who would be glad to see her Majesty become a Mother but to half her Children, and act the part of a Step-mother towards the rest; who are unjustly represented as undutiful, whilst they are afraid of no Tests of Obedience and Affection, but such as wound their Consciences: whereas Religion, the surest Principle of Obedience to her Majesty, teaches us to submit them to the Authority of God alone as our Father; who will rule us as he has begot us, not by the Will of Man, but according to his own good Pleasure. Let it not be thought Disloyalty and Presumption, when the Dissenters are willing to sacrifice their Lives and Fortunes in her Majesty's Service, that they plead for the Exemption of Conscience from human Authority; since that can be subject but to one Lord, who if he had not had a prior Right to reserve it to himself, her Majesty could have no Right to the others. But if by the very conscientious Abstinence of the Dissenters from a stated Communion with the Church, her Majesty has some Security for their conscientious Regard to her Authority, and a ready Subjection of their Lives and Estates to her Service; and that they are found faultless in the necessary Qualifications to a Place: 'Tis to be hop'd that none of our Priests will use the Politics of *Darius's* Ministers, and object that against the Dissenters, which they seriously believe to be the Law of their God.

*See the
Pref. p. 21.
to a short
Narrative
of the Pro-
ceedings a-
gainst the
Bp of St.
A—.*

And thus one part of the Objection is answer'd. To the other, which supposes the Dissenters *Hypocrites*, for complying with the Sacramental Test: and that therefore 'tis not to be suppos'd, they will boggle at this new one, or at any thing that shall be requir'd to qualify them for a Place; it may be return'd, that if this part of the Objection be of force, it's worth the while to consider to what end the Test is made: Since it appears from the Objection, that this will do the Church no Service, and yet be a Temptation to the Dissenters to play the Hypo-

*Debates in
the House
of Com-
mons,
1680. p.
211, 212.*

crite and wound their Consciences. For certainly a Number of Men that shall only go into a Church to disguise their Opinions, and to keep their Places; and shall laugh at her Modes of Worship, as soon as ever they are got out; are not likely to become very sincere themselves, or to strengthen the Church meerly by being her reputed Members. For as it was once remark'd by a Great Man in the House of Commons; "What Love, Friendship, or Obedience can the Church expect from such Persons as are forc'd to come to Church? How can they be depended on, or the Church strengthned? You may prevent their Conventicles, and force them either to come to Church, or pay Fines, and be imprison'd: But you cannot expect that Force should alter their Opinions or Affections, without which the Church can never be the stronger. Nay this is one way amongst others, by which the Persecution of Dissenters has always been to the prejudice of an Establish'd Church in all Countrys, and a Toleration always to its advantage.

But farther: If it appears, that the Dissenters might qualify themselves for an Office, by receiving the Sacrament after the manner of the Church of England, according to their known Principles, and the Rules of the Gospel: Then it will follow that there is no likelihood of their complying with the one, from their compliance with the other. Since as none will deny but a Law forbidding Dissenters in Office to go to Meetings, will thwart their own Principles; so to hinder Occasional Communion with the Church, will be prov'd directly opposite to the Rules of the Gospel. If this can be made out, the Objection will wholly vanish: And it will appear at the same time, that it does not follow from the Dissenters qualifying themselves from Offices, by a Sacramental Test, that they deserve to be censur'd for the odious Crime of Hypocrisy, or for any other. Since it will appear that they have acted consistently with their own Principles, and the Example of the Apostles.

To shew this, We must call to mind, that the Dissenters hold the *Church of England*, to be a *true Church of Christ*: But at the same time account some of her Modes of Worship irregular and corrupt; and a great many more of them indifferent, not only in their own Nature, but after they are enjoin-

ned by the Governors of the Church. And consequently that upon these and some other Reasons, not at all pertinent to the present Case, the Church of England is not so well constituted for Edification as their own. These are the known Principles of Dissenters, and those by which their Occasional Communion with the Church of England, may be vindicated from the high Crime of Hypocrisy, which is laid to their Charge. For from their owning the Church of England a true Church of Christ, it follows, that they think it lawful to have Communion with her. For since she is united to Christ the Head, the Dissenters have a secret and invisible Communion with her in the same Spirit of Grace, and the same Supplis: And have an Apparent and Visible Communion with her in the same Faith, the same Essentials of Worship, and all the Fundamental Rules of Discipline: And consequently might have the same visible Communion in all the Modes of her Worship and Discipline too; were it not for those other Principles of theirs, which we have just now mention'd, and which we should consider more distinctly, did not Charity oblige us to wave it, in order to desire some Men to have a little regard to their own Credit, who have had none at all to the Reputation of their Neighbours.

It has been a common Notion receiv'd and cultivated upon this Occasion, that the Church of England and the Dissenters are of *two Religions*. I confess Rancour and Malice never want such Invectives; and probably the Systems may furnish out some such sort of Sophistry, by which unwary Minds may be gull'd into this Opinion. 'Tis an easy matter to frame Schemes of Divinity, and to draw Consequences to impeach another Man's Belief; and much easier to talk down any Men as Persons of Heretical Principles, and of a different Religion, who happen to differ from us about its Modes and Accidents, after we have once plac'd our Religion there. But if Mankind would be perswaded to receive fewer Impressions from others, and to form more of their Notions from the Scriptures, we should quickly learn that it was meer Cant and Jargon to accuse the Dissenters, of being of a different Religion from the Church: Since they have all the Unitys of Religion, which those Holy Books require. And that neither the Church of England nor the Dissenters hold any Principles, that

that can hinder their being of one Body, and having one Spirit, and their being call'd to one Hope of their Calling : Or their acknowledging one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all. If these Unitys will make one Religion, and 'twould be very hard if they should not, I'm sure the Church and the Dissenters have not two. But if the World will not be contented with these, but are resolv'd to have an Unity of Opinions relating to lesser matters into the Bargain, it must be allow'd indeed that the Church and the Dissenters are of two Religions ; but then the Difference will not be to the Scandal of either. Since in this sense there are as many Religions as there are Men, and as great a Variety in our Sentiments as there is in our Faces, where there are hardly two alike. The Wisdom of God, which foresaw that this Variety must necessarily happen, has therefore mercifully provided a Spirit of Charity and Peace to be the Unity of our Spirits, and the Band of Perfection by which that Unity is to be obtain'd, notwithstanding the disagreement of our Beliefs. Christianity, like Friendship which substitutes mutual Condescensions to an entire Conformity to common Maxims, has instituted Toleration as the Religion of this World, reserving Uniformity for the splendor of the next.

1 Cor. 14.
40.

St. Paul indeed enjoins the Corinthians to do all things in Decency and Order : But whatever be meant by Decency and Order, I'm sure Uniformity and Persecution are not. For on the one hand, there were a great many different Opinions amongst them, which he never attempted to reconcile ; while on the other hand, he permitted the Dissensions about the use of Days, Meats, States of Life, and other Circumstantials of Religion ; but commands them to receive him that was so weak in the Faith as to have scruples about these lesser matters, and not to trouble him with doubtful disputations. Since God is said to be " Not the Author of
v. 33. " Confusion but of Peace : It seems very naturally to follow, that Peace and Humility are the decent Order which St. Paul commanded, and the Cure of that Confusion which he forbids. Whilst we know but in part, and prophesy but in part, we can agree but in part too. The real and perfect Unity of Knowledge and Opinion we may endeavour after, but to no purpose, till that which is in part shall be done away, and that which

which is perfect shall come : That is, at that time, as St. Paul expresses it, when the Saints shall be perfected, and the Members of the Body of Christ, fitly join'd to their Head and to one another, shall be edify'd and finish'd into a perfect Man, arriving at the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ Jesus. Eph. 4. 12, 13. But whilst we are on this side that happy State, Assents and Consents, Church-Oaths and Subscriptions, with any other Instruments of Uniformity, may make good State-Engines, and serve a Church to persecute Dissenters, but for one Conformist shall make a dozen Hypocrites, tempting Men to talk and act Uniformly, when it never helps them in the least to think so. That this has been the Effect of all Endeavours after Uniformity, every History of Uniformity, in every Age where it has been attempted in Worship or Doctrine, can testify. But none better than that of the Church of England, who has bore so hard upon the Consciences of some of her best Members with Subscriptions, as to force from some of them, that celebrated distinction of the Articles, into Articles of Peace and Articles of Doctrine. I believe no Distinction was ever more welcom, or ever did a Church more Service. For Men who could neither think nor act Uniformly, could then with a safe Conscience, Subscribe and Consent and Swear as Uniformly as the best ; and could use some Forms in agreement with the Church, tho' they had a quite different Sense of them from the Majority of those that Consented, and the Intention of those that impos'd 'em. Now one cannot help concluding from all this, that till Uniformity be reach'd amongst Church Men, it should not be so earnestly impos'd on others : And that till we can arrive at Uniformity in Opinions and Resolutions as well as in Oaths, Consents and Subscriptions, it is not so prudent to inveigh against Hypocrisy, nor to censure *different Opinions as different Religions*, as it should seem by the measures of some to be thought to be.

But to resume the Principles of the Dissenters, and to invert the Order in which we recited 'em, since that will best serve our purpose ; the First will be, That they are of Opinion that they cannot *edify so well* by them as by their own : That is, that they are not so likely to be made better Men, and more useful Neighbours, by the Modes of the Worship and Discipline of the Church of England, as by those of the Protestant :

testant Dissenters. But if it happens upon any Occasion, that they can bring as much Glory to God, and be as much edify'd by worshipping God according to the Modes of Worship us'd in the Church of England, as without them in their own Assemblies; then they think they may lawfully join with her in those too. Now some Dissenters are of Opinion, that this Occasion returns as often as 'tis necessary, by Communicating with the Church of England, to demonstrate the charitable Opinion they have of Her: That they own her a True Church of Christ, and only separate from her, because of her want of Discipline, her imposing indifferent and corrupt Ceremonys in the Worship of God, and because she is not so likely in their Opinion to improve 'em in Christian Knowledge and Virtue as their own. Now hereby they do but assert in Practice, what they own in Principle; and act agreeably to that Christian Spirit, which obliges 'em to go as far to the healing of Breaches as they can; to excite and provoke their Brethren to Love, and to represent the Christian Institution as a Doctrine that answers the Design of its Promulgation: Which was not only the good Will of Heaven towards Men, but Peace among the Inhabitants of the Earth. But others are of Opinion, that this Occasion returns only, when they qualify themselves for some Office, wherein they may be useful to Mankind and to their Country, in securing Religion against the Outrages of the common Enemy. Whether this has been the only End, that the Dissenters have propos'd to themselves in Occasional Communion, to qualify them for an Office; yet it must be allow'd to their Honor, that this has been the Effect. And indeed, besides that one ought in Charity to think the best of 'em, all things concur to keep us from concluding, that either Honor or Secular Interest cou'd engage 'em in such a Practice. The Expensiveness of most of the Offices for which Dissenters have qualify'd themselves, takes off Interest from being the Temptation. And as the known Practice of most of 'em in Occasional Communion, before an Office made it necessary, is a full vindication of them from such a Surmise: So the great Endeavours which that worthy Gentleman made (against whom this Cry was the loudest) to keep out of all Offices, from his inimitable Modesty, and his Sense of the Greatness of the Trusts, may serve as his particular Justification. The

*Sir Tho.
Abney.*

The second is, That tho the Church of England be a true Church of Christ ; yet that her *Modes of Worship* are not only *indifferent* in their own Nature; but remain so, even after the Governours of the Church have done all they can to make them necessary. And that every Christian retains a liberty to use or not to use them, according as his Prudence and Charity shall direct; regulated by those Rules that are laid down in the Writings of the Apostles, about the use of indifferent Things. Now the Dissenters think that joining with the Church in those Ceremonys would be betraying Christian Liberty, and countenancing Rigorous Impositions: Whereas they think themselves oblig'd to defend their Freedom, and by no means to give others any Occasion to conclude, from any Practice of theirs, that they hold such Impositions either necessary or expedient. But if any Circumstances free their Communion with the Church in any of her Ceremonys, from these Inconveniences: And that they may join in such Parts of her Worship without giving up their own Freedom, or abetting Human Restraint; or, which comes to the same thing, without making it a necessary Inference from their Practice, that they think such Rites and Ceremonys either Proper or Necessary: Then they think they may lawfully join with her in her Worship, tho mixt with some Rights of Human Invention. Now some Dissenters are of opinion that their Communion with the Church of England is sufficiently guarded against these Interpretations, by frequenting the Communion of the Church but seldom, and keeping stately to their own. But others are of opinion, that it is best guarded against these Inferences, when they Communicate with the Church of England as oblig'd by Act of Parliament, thereby to declare that they are no Papists, to qualify themselves for an Office, in which they think, they may do their Country Service. Since nothing can be more obvious, than that in this case, they hold Communion with the Church of England as a true Church of Christ, without owning her Modes of Worship expedient or necessary. For when a Dissenter receives the Sacrament with the Church of England, primarily as a Religious Act, and to a Civil purpose in a secondary Sense; which purpose the Act of Parliament sets forth, is to declare he is no Papist: No Man can conclude

from his Communion with the Church of England in this case, (what he might, did the Act of Parliament set forth, it was to declare himself of the Church of England) that he thinks these Modes necessary or expedient : For where is the Consequence of this Illation ? He is no Papist, therefore he approves of the Ceremonys of the Church of England.

Most of the Dissenters go farther, and think the Church of England, tho a true Church, to have some Modes of her Worship and Discipline *irregular and corrupt*. Now tho they cannot have a stated Communion with her in any part of her Worship ; nor any Occasional Communion in those parts, which they think corrupt, lest they should countenance those Corruptions, and give occasion to others to conclude, they think her way of Worship preferable to their own : Yet when upon any Occasion the Circumstances of things will allow them to have Communion in any part of Worship, that is pure and uncorrupted, without countenancing the Corruptions introduc'd in others, or giving any occasion to conclude, they prefer her Modes of Worship to those of the Dissenters, who in their opinion, have kept the Divine Institutions without any alteration ; then they think they may lawfully have Communion with the Church of England for the Reasons aforesaid. In the Rule the Dissenters agree, tho in the Application indeed they have some difference. For some are of opinion, that Communicating but seldom with the Church of England is a sufficient Guard against countenancing any of her Irregularitys, or her Defects : And others are of opinion that communicating with her to qualify themselves for an Office, is the only, or at least the best guard against it : Since in that case the Legislature has declar'd it is only to give a Sacramental Security that they are not Papists. To sum up these Opinions of the Dissenters in a word. The *first of their Principles obliges them to hold constant Communion with the Church of England ; but the Second, Third, and Fourth supersede it, and make the Dissenters abstain from that Communion, till the Circumstances of Things remove those Principles out of the way ; and then upon that occasion, the first is of force*. From all this it appears, that the Dissenters may *without* incurring the Charge of *Hypocrisy* (or indeed of making a Religious Act serve merely to a Secular Interest) receive the *Sacrament Occasionally* in the Church of England, when

when they can't do it *statedly*; and especially to qualify themselves for an Office, when they can't receive it, in many other cases. And since it appears that the Dissenters have not contradicted their Principles, intaking the Positive Test now in being; let it not be thought, till it can be prov'd, that a Negative Test can consist with those Principles (which I am sure it never can) that it will not disoblige the Dissenters, because that for the Advantage of a Place, they will be brought to comply.

Thus it appears that the Dissenters agree with themselves. Let us see now whether they can produce *Apostolical Example*, to support their Practice: And indeed that seems to be very full on their side. But to set the Apostles Practice in a proper Light, we must represent the state of the Reform'd World in their times. In which there were two sorts of Worshippers of the true God in Jesus Christ. The one reform'd from the Religion of the Jews, the other from the Idolatry of the Gentiles. The Reformation of the Jews in their Worship consisted in the bare Administration of the Sacraments, and for the rest was restrain'd to Doctrine: In which they went so far as to become a true Church of Christ, wherein Salvation was to be obtain'd. For they believ'd that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Living God, was the Messiah that had been promis'd to their Fathers: That he had suffer'd upon a Cross, but was risen again from the Dead, and ascended up into the Heavens. Consequent to this they believ'd, that they were to be justifi'd by Faith in the Cross of Christ from those Sins, from which they could not be acquitted by the Law of Moses. And that whereas the Jewish Purifications only avail'd to the cleansing of the Flesh, their Consciences should be purg'd and sanctifi'd by the Gift of the Holy Ghost, sent by Jesus Christ, who was ascended above the Heavens. And last of all, that thro' his Resurrection, they should obtain a Resurrection to Eternal Life. This was the sum of our Saviour's Institution, of the Apostles Preaching, and of the Jewish Reformation. But in all other things the Law of Moses was still observ'd, and the Rites of their old Religion still retain'd: Tho some of 'em, which they pretended to have receiv'd from the Tradition of the Elders, had corrupted the Worship of God to a very great degree; as our Saviour often testifies. The

Mat. 28.

19.

Luke 22.

19.

Acts 8. 37.

13. 32.

2. 23.

13. 30.

2. 33.

13. 39.

Heb. 9. 13.

Acts 2. 33.

25. 23.

Mark 7. 3.

4, 7, 8, 9.

rest being instituted by God but for a time, which was then expir'd, were all indifferent. None of them tended to Edification, but rather to the ministring Questions and Scruples to the Consciences of the weak and unlearned; being of a troublesom nature, embarrassing sincere Godliness, and the Remains of a Burden, that neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear. However these Rites were still impos'd upon all by the High-Priest and his Kindred, together with the Elders, the Representative Body of the Jewish Church. And the Jews submitted to the Imposition, as well those who reform'd, as those who did not. And as all who would not conform to them were held to be without the Pale of the Church, Infidels and Sinners of the Gentiles, with whom it was not lawful, no not so much as to eat: So whoever among the Jews did relinquish them, was thought a Subverter of the World, and of all that was good. And it was about such sort of Offenders that their Ecclesiastical Censures were in a manner wholly taken up. They animadverted severely upon Neglects of the lesser Matters of the Law, whilst breaking in upon Essentials was not thought criminal. And according to their Customs and Traditions, by which they interpreted the Law, tho in many cases directly opposite to the Law, they often censur'd those who broke a Custom to observe the Law of God. So that *their Discipline* was become, like their Doctrine, wholly *Irregular and Corrupt*. But in order to support it, and to give both the one and the other the countenance of the Law, they allow'd no Person a *Right to Preach*, or to Interpret the Law, but him that had receiv'd that Right from the same Men, from whom he had the Traditions he was to teach. He was to have this Power convey'd to him by the Imposition of Hands of the Eldership, who pretended to have their Power convey'd to them, by an uninterrupted Imposition from the first High-Priest and Elders, that were instituted in the Jewish Church.

Now this will plainly appear to have been the State of the Reform'd Church of the Jews, if we consider, that the Apostles, at their first preaching the Gospel among them, did not endeavour, nor they comply with any farther Reformation. When we peruse those Sermons which the Apostles made to the Jews, and which are recorded in the Acts, we find they

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contain the Doctrines we have just now recited : But we never find any thing in them about the Laws of Moses, or the Discipline or Hierarchy of the Jewish Church. They let them go on to observe the Rites, and obey the spiritual Governors, which they were us'd to do, before this new Doctrine had been taught. And no wonder : Since our Saviour had commanded his Apostles and Disciples, and all the Jews, to observe to do, what the Scribes and Pharisees bid them, because they sat in Moses's Seat. And indeed the Apostles themselves at their first Preaching at Jerusalem did not know, but that Moses was still to be obey'd. God had conceal'd the Abrogation of Moses's Law from them, as he did many other Truths; letting them into the knowledge of them but by degrees : For he well knew how Human Nature was to be wrought upon, and had a tender regard to its Weakness. So that 'tis more than probable, the Apostles suppos'd, that the Doctrines of Christianity were to be taught, and the Jewish Worship to be kept up, and no further Separation to be made from the Establish'd Church, than those new Doctrines should necessarily introduce.

Both Peter and John went up to the Temple at the usual hour of Prayer, to join with the Establish'd Church in that solemn part of Worship. And Peter made a scruple of Meats forbidden by the Law of Moses, tho God gave him a Dispensation, and of going to Cornelius; tho a just and a devout Man, who fear'd God, pray'd alway, and gave much Alms to the People, and was of good Report among all the Nation of the Jews. And when he did go to him, it was to profelyte him to the Faith of Christ, and to the Observation of the Law of Moses : as we shall presently evince. Agreeably to these Notions and Practice of the Apostles, the reform'd Jews their Hearers, who became Members of the Church at Jerusalem, still thought themselves oblig'd to worship God, according to the Rites of the Establish'd Church : As is plain in the Instance of those four Men, who, in observance of Moses's Law, made the Vow of Nazarites, performing all the Rites of that Vow, and of the appointed Purification : And in that the same Sects were still kept up among 'em, after they had receiv'd the Gospel-Doctrine : And to which they had been distinguish'd by their different Practices with

Mat. 23, 2, 3.

Acts 3, 1.

II. 7, 8.

II. 12, 22.

Act. 21, 23.

15. 5.

Religion, before that Doctrine had been ever preach'd or entertain'd. And agreeably to their own Notions, all the believing Jews equally prest the Observation of the Law of Moses, with the Entertainment of the Gospel Doctrine, upon those, who, by St. Paul's Ministry among the Gentiles, were turn'd unto God. And they disputed so warmly for the receiving of the one as well as the other, that the Apostles Barnabas and Paul found it necessary, for the silencing of these Reform'd Jews, and the quieting of the Convert Gentiles, to go to the Church at Jerusalem, remaining there under the Promise and the Presidency of the Holy Ghost, to determine the Question. And indeed it was first discover'd to Paul, not by Conference with the Apostles, but by special Revelation, that he should preach Christ to the Gentiles, without requiring any Works commanded by Moses's Law. Which Gospel he preach'd for 17 years after his Conversion among the Gentiles; and then communicated it to those of Reputation and Eminence at Jerusalem; by which the Apostles and Elders are the most likely to be meant. They after hearing the History, and seeing an Instance of the success of this Gospel among the Gentiles, in Titus, whom Paul had for this end possibly brought up to Jerusalem, and a long Dispute upon the matter, did by a Decree of the Holy Ghost confirm this Doctrine to the Gentiles, among whom it had been preach'd.

But after the Church of Jerusalem had given it as the Mind of the Holy Ghost, That the Reform'd Gentiles were not under the Law of Moses, she did not think that Law abrogated, where it had once oblig'd: And therefore did not use the same liberty her self, which she had allow'd to the Gentiles. Whence it was, that the Spleen the Jews bore to St. Paul at his return to Jerusalem from planting the Gentile Churches, was not, that he had taught the Gentiles, but the Jews who were among the Gentiles, to forsake the Law of Moses and the Customs of the Elders. And indeed if the Reform'd Jews at Jerusalem, had allow'd themselves the same Liberty, which they had after a solemn debate confirm'd to the Gentiles, Peter would not have been under such dreadful Apprehensions lest certain Jews, who came down to Antioch, from St. James (who was then in all probability at Jerusalem) should have seen him live according to its tenor.

nor. And with this account of the Jewish Reformation, fully agrees that, which St. James and the Elders give to St. Paul of the Church at Jerusalem, upon his return thither, from planting the Reform'd Churches of the Gentiles, and confirming by this Decree, the Gospel, which he had preach'd to them for 17 years before. "Thou see'st Brother (say they) how many thousands of Jews there are who believe; that is, the Gospel: Of which Remission of Sins by the Blood of Christ, Sanctification by his Spirit, and Resurrection unto Eternal Life, were the Sum; and yet they "are all "zealous of the Law. And long after this: When St. Paul had told the Galatians, that the Rites of Moses's Law would be damnable to them: He is forc'd, in consideration of the strong Prejudices of the Hebrews for that Law, to content himself with proving, that those Rites were superseded, leaving them to make this Conclusion barely, that therefore they were indifferent.

Act. 21. 20.

Gal. 5. 2.

Ep. to the Hebrews.

It is farther to be observ'd, that where the Discipline or the Government of the Establish'd Church was found inconsistent with their Reform'd Doctrine, as it was when the Council went to forbid them to preach that Doctrine: They then dissented from it, and declar'd they would obey God before Men. But at the same time we must remember, that those Doctrines of the Gospel which we just now epitomiz'd, with the two Sacraments, were all they knew of the Will of God, more than the rest of the Jews. But yet they by no means deny the Authority of the Council, or plead an Exemption from it; alledging, that Christ had entirely set them at liberty from their Ecclesiastical Cognizance in all Matters, as he might have done by his Prophetic Right, if it had so pleas'd him; which is known to have been the highest Power in the Jewish Commonwealth, and to have extended both to Church and State: But they pretend a freedom only in this case, where there was a necessity laid upon them, to attest the truth of those things they had seen and heard; and in cases of the like nature. Intimating however, that in others, where nothing should be enjoin'd contrary to the Will of God, they should be obey'd. And one would not think, that any Body should readily suppose, that they dissented, and set themselves or their Conventicle at liberty from the Discipline of the Establish'd Church, when they

Acts 4. 19.

5. 40, 42.

V. 20.

they introduc'd nothing new in this respect, besides a very few Institutions, absolutely necessary upon the separation they had made, in point of Doctrine and the Sacraments, from the Establish'd Church; but not sufficient for the preservation of Order, in an entirely separate Society.

There were one Set of the Worshippers of the True God in Jesus Christ: The other were those *who reform'd from the Idolatry of the Gentiles*. The State of Reformation among these Converts, was the same in *Doctrine* and the Sacraments with that introduc'd among some of the Jews: But in all other things was very different. For they retain'd none of their old Rites and Modes of Worship, and did not exchange 'em for any new ones, either of the reform'd Jews, or of their own Invention. They *worship'd* God by Jesus Christ, in the *naked Simplicity* of the Christian Doctrine. Prayer and Preaching, giving of Thanks, and of Alms, with the bare Administration of the two Sacraments, just as they were instituted, made up the whole of their Public Worship. No Doctrine was receiv'd among 'em that Christ had not reveal'd; nor any Practice that he had not commanded. Nor was any thing forbid, but what was in its own nature destructive of Christianity; excepting the use of Meats offer'd to Idols, of things strangled, Fornication and Blood, which were forbid to the Churches in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia; and were Prohibitions at that time, as the Holy Ghost expressly declares, absolutely necessary. So that upon the whole, among the reform'd Gentiles, there were no *Terms of Communion* but what Christ had made the *Terms of Salvation*. Faith and Repentance being the Characters of a Man that should be sav'd, were the only Characters requir'd in a Church-Member. Neither the weakness of Faith, nor of Knowledge, were to be Bars to his Admission. He was to be receiv'd in Love, and not to doubtful Disputations. The Governors of the reform'd Gentile Churches, did not take upon them to make indifferent Things necessary, nor dubious Things stated Terms of Communion. They did not pretend to be Lords of the Faith of their Hearers, and of God's Heritage, by making any new Laws, and altering the nature of Things: But left all such Matters as they found them, declaring themselves Servants in God's House, and that all their Business was, to do and publish their

Act. 15. 23.
V. 28.

Rom. 14. 1.

Master's Will. And those, who *did officiate* in the Public Assemblies of the Gentiles (who were of the Household of Faith) as Stewards of the Mysteries of God, were such as the Lay-Christians call'd the Brethren ordain'd, constituted and appointed by their Suffrages, given by the holding up of their Hands *. But in these Popular Ordinations the Apostles did preside, that they might be the more regular, declaring and initiating the Person ordain'd by solemn Fasting and Prayer. And in this sense the Apostles were said *χειροτονούντες πρεσβυτέρους*, a Phrase commonly us'd in those Countrys, and taken from their Forms of Civil Government †.

Agreeably to this new way of Ordination (quite contrary to that by the Chirothesia among the Jews) 'tis more than probable, that they planted the Churches in a very different way; and gave 'em different Rules of Society and Discipline from the Church at Jerusalem: Introducing a great Dissension from the reform'd Jews, in the Simplicity of Worship, and the *Methods of Discipline and Government*. These Churches therefore were held a Schismatical sort of Assemblies, with

* Acts 14. 23. *χειροτονήσαντες δὲ αὐτοῖς πρεσβυτέρους κατ' ἐκκλησίαις*, which is very ill translated in our English Bibles.

† 'Tis known that at Athens, upon enacting a Law, or repealing one, the *Nomothetæ*, who were the Representatives of the People, gave the Chirotonia of the People; and yet the Athenian Law says, *διαχειροτονίαν δὲ ποιεῖν τὰς πρεσβυτέρους περὶ τέτων τῶν νόμων*. Let the *Proædri*, who were to the *Nomothetæ*, but as Sheriffs to a Common Hall, make the Chirotonia to all Laws. Demost. contr. Timocr. And whereas 'tis known that the People of Athens did chuse their Magistrates by the Chirotonia; Demost. Phil. 1. Yet Pollux says, that the *Thesmothetæ*, who were but, like Sheriffs, the Magistrates or Presidents of the Assembly, met to ordain or appoint a Magistrate, did *επατεργάζεσθαι χειροτονίαν*. L. 8. c. 8.

In this sense Moses is said to make Rulers, and to chuse able Men to be Heads over the People, Exod. 18. 25. Deut. 1. 13. inasmuch as he propos'd the Magistracy to 'em, and the Qualifications of the Men that were to bear it. But 'twas the People resolv'd there should be such a Magistracy, and chuse the Men who were to be invested with it. They saw, as it follows, that the thing propos'd was good for 'em to do, and they comply'd with it, v. 14. It's remarkable that *καταστήσω*, the word us'd by the Septuagint, is us'd by the best Greek Writers, for a Proposal made to those, who have Authority to enact it. And Calvin says, it's a common Phrase among the Roman Historians, *Consulem qui Comitia habuerit creasse novos Magistratus non aliam ob causam, nisi quia suffragia receperit, & Populum moderatus est in eligendo*. Calv. Inst. l. 4. c. 3. §. 15.

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whom it was no more lawful to have any Religious Communion, than it was to have common Entercourses with the Persons that compos'd 'em. Peter was afraid to be censur'd for the one when he had Communion with the Church at Antioch; and for the other, when he did but converse with Cornelius. This Superstition of the Jews towards the Gentiles, is intimated to us by that common Phrase, That it was unlawful to go in to 'em, or to eat with 'em: Whereby all Civil and Religious Communion is denoted *. The Jews had very narrow Spirits, and treated all as Strangers to God, and all hopes of a better Life; who were Aliens from their Church, and the Commonwealth of Israel. I hope my Reader will excuse me for being so particular in the Representation of these two sorts of worshipping Assemblies: Since it will make all that will be said, upon the Apostles Practice and Example in Occasional Communion with both these Assemblies, much more clear and easy. Besides, these Thoughts being somewhat out of the common way, I promise my self, that the Novelty will compensate for their length.

Gal. 2. 7. It will appear to every one that peruses 'em seriously, that there are not greater Differences (to speak the most modestly) between any Protestant Churches, than there were between those of the reform'd Jews and Gentiles: And yet the Apostles had *Communion Statedly* with the one, and *Occasionally* with the other. St. Peter, who was the Apostle, and great Teacher of the reform'd Circumcision, and a very strict observer of the Law, as appears by his scrupling to go to Cornelius, and his refusing to use the Liberty God gave him in a Vision, to eat Meats forbidden by Moses's Law; yet went in unto the Reform'd Gentiles at Antioch; eat with them, and liv'd in

Gal. 2. 12, 13, 14. *all respects as they did*: And so did the other Jews that were with him. By these Phrases nothing less can be intended, than the intire Freedom he us'd upon that occasion from the Law of Moses, and his intire conformity to the manner of

* As appears, Acts 11. 23. where Peter being accus'd of going in to the Uncircumcis'd, and eating with them, justifies himself, ver. 15, 16, 17. only by vindicating his preaching to them, and baptizing them in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Worship and Discipline receiv'd among the Christians at Antioch, who at that time were freed from all Jewish Impositions. For besides that this Phraseology denotes this to us, St. Peter's Carriage and Behaviour to the reform'd Jews, who came down to Antioch from St. James, puts it beyond dispute: For upon their arrival, he immediately withdraws from the Communion of the Christians, betaking himself again to his Jewish Rites and Superstitions; and so did the other Jews that were with him. St. Peter did not conceal his Conversation with Cornelius, but insisted on his Justification. For tho indeed it was thought unlawful to have any Conversation with the Gentiles upon any account whatsoever, as St. Peter himself owns: before his Commission and Success, convinc'd both him and all the reform'd Jews of the contrary, in the Case of Cornelius: Yet even then, neither he nor they knew more, than that as he preach'd up the Christian Doctrine to the Jews, without interrupting their Observation of the Law of Moses; so he was to preach the same Doctrine to the Gentiles. but proselyting 'em withal to the observation of the said Law. For St. Paul, to whom the Revelation was solely made, that Moses's Law was not binding to the Gentiles, as we have before observ'd, had not as yet communicated that Mystery of the Gospel; not coming up to Jerusalem about it, till some Years afterwards. So that tho St. Peter had convers'd with Cornelius and his Family, to proselyte them to the Christian Doctrine, and to the Observation of the Law; and had satisfy'd the Jews of the Lawfulness of his Practice: Yet since he fear'd lest what he had done at Antioch should come under their notice, 'tis a certain Sign, that there was more in this Practice, than there was in the former. And it was this, that he, who was a Jew, having at that time convers'd and worship'd God with the reform'd Gentiles, without any manner of regard to the Law of Moses; did not know what treatment and uneasiness he might meet with from the Jews upon that account. For they were not as yet appriz'd, or at least perswaded, that Moses's Law was abrogated to them, and its Rites and Ceremonys become indifferent things; tho they had, before this, own'd, that it was not binding, nor its Rites necessary to the Gentiles. Tho therefore, to avoid this Inconvenience, he dissembl'd and conceal'd the Truth, in

Acts 10.
22. 7.
something
by
Mark 9.11
John 4.22

Acts 10.
Acts 15.

Acts 10.
47. 42

Gal. 2. 12, 13. acting as if these Ceremonys were necessary; yet it is plain that he had declar'd before, they were indifferent, by his Occasional Conformity to a Gentile Church.

St. Paul had upon some Occasions Communion with the Jews. His stated Communion, we may be sure, was with the Gentiles: For he was their Apostle by God's special Favor and Commission. He was sensible of the Honor that was done to him, and greatly magnify'd his Office. For to him it was made known, by special Revelation, that Christ had in his Flesh abolish'd the Law of Moses's Commandments contain'd in Ordinances, and thereby broke down that Partition Wall, which kept the Gentiles strangers from God, and Foreigners to the Commonwealth of Israel, making them Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Household of God. He was very forward to make known this Counsel of the most High: For we find it the Subject of his Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, and to the Hebrews: And more or less insisted on in most of his Epistles to the rest of the Gentile-Churches. He declar'd to them, that God was to be worship'd in the simplicity of the Gospel, without the Works of the Law: And settled them according to different Rules of Discipline and Government from the Establish'd Church of the Jews. By which he brought a very great Diffension into the Reform'd part of the World. Nevertheless the Success of this Doctrine and Enterprize, answer'd the Force of the Truth, and his Zeal in declaring it. It spread over all Asia and Greece in a very short time. So that he became the great Envy of all the Jews, being revil'd and persecuted, not only by the Unbelievers, but by those that had Reform'd. Those of 'em who liv'd in Asia, and saw what this Apostle was a doing, follow'd him up to Jerusalem, and there mov'd a Riot: by which Paul narrowly escaping with his Life, lost his Liberty; being confin'd some years at Cæsarea, and afterwards at Rome; whence he assures the Ephesians he was a Prisoner for preaching up this Diffension, the great Mystery of the Gospel.

And yet as high flown a Dissenter as he was, both from the Church establish'd by Law, and in part reform'd: Yet, something like a Nonconformist, he could communicate with her upon Occasion. And I suppose it will not be deny'd, that he

he did it with a good Conscience. For whilst he was sowing this Dissension over all Asia and Grece, he made the Vow of peculiar Separation from the World, and Devotion to God, commonly call'd the Vow of a Nazarite; which expir'd at Cenchrea: Where to make it public, that the vow'd term of time was at an end, he shav'd his Head. He took great care to be at Jerusalem to observe the Feast of Pentecost; and there he again made a Vow, for such a term, as might expire with the Vows of four Men, Members of the Church at Jerusalem: That so he might observe the Rites of this Vow, and of his Purification from it, in common with them, and according to the known Orders and Practice of the Establish'd Church. And tho he was falsly accus'd of polluting the Temple; yet he assures his Countrymen the Jews at Rome, upon his arrival there, in order to answer to this Accusation before Cesar to whom he had appeal'd, that the charge was wholly false, for that he had committed nothing against the People, or the Customs of their Fathers. Which was as much as to say, that he had walk'd orderly and kept the Law. And that we mayn't imagine any of these Instances of his Occasional Conformity to have been a meer Accident, or to have happen'd thro a surprize. or to be a Practice for which he cou'd not account: He declares, that it was his constant custom, to the Jews to become a Jew, as well as a Gentile among the Gentiles. Nay, so full is his Example in this case, to exempt us from all doubt of his Occasional Conformity, that he did not only conform to the Jewith Worship upon some occasions himself, but advis'd Timothy to conform too: Who was to have his stated Communion with those Churches, which Paul planted in Asia and Greece, and who were forbid to be circumcis'd, or to observe any Law of Moses, excepting the Abstinence from things strangled and from Blood, which he enjoyn'd to a very few of 'em. For Timothy was circumcis'd at the time. that he was to go forth with him to be his fellow-helper, in settling those Churches, and his Companion in the Lord. And yet further, to convince us that even his advising Occasional Conformity was but meerly Occasional, he would not suffer Titus to be circumcis'd at Jerusalem; whose Case at first view seems to be just the same with Timothy's: For they were both Greeks, both converted by Paul, and both

Act. 18. 10.

v. 21.

Acts 21.

23, 24, 25.

21. 28.

24. 25.

28. 17.

1 Cor. 9.

20, 21.

Acts 15. 3.

Ibid.

Gal. 2. 3.

us'd Acts 16. 1.

Tit. 1. 4. us'd as his Messengers and Companions: Yet with this Dispari-
 1 Tim. 1. 2. ty in the case, which will serve to prove his Advice to Timoth-
 y still more remarkably Occasional, that his Advice to Ti-
 tus was given at Jerusalem, the Center of the Jews, and their
 Religion; when that to Timorhy was given at Lystra in Ly-
 caonia, out of the Sphere of the Jewish Power, and where
 that Religion was but barely tolerated.

Thus I think it appears beyond Contradiction, that the Apo-
 stle Peter, and divers other Jews, tho stated Communicants
 with the Reform'd Church of the Jews, were Occasional ones
 with the Churches of the Gentiles: And that Paul and Timo-
 thy, tho fix'd Communicants with the Separate Assemblys of
 the Christian Gentiles, did join upon Occasion in the Modes
 of Worship us'd by the Reform'd Jews, according to the Rites
 of the Establish'd Church. However at present these do not ap-
 pear to be any thing more than *Facts* in Sacred Story; unless
 we can find out the Reasons upon which the Apostles allow'd
 themselves in this Practice; and can make it appear, that those
 Reasons were not peculiar to their Case, but remain yet in
 force to all Christians in the like Circumstances. If this can
 be made out, the Fact will come under the Notion of an *Ex-
 ample* obliging and warranting the like Practice. To do this,
 we must call to mind in the first place, that Edification or the
 Advancement of Religion in our own Minds, or in the
 Minds of others, being in the Opinion of the Apostles, Re-
 ligion it self; and the Glory of our great Creator the end
 of it, which is advanc'd in proportion to the growth and pro-
 gress Religion makes: All Rules and Modes of Worship must
 Rom. 14. 17, in their Opinion be subordinated to it, as means conducing to
 19. this great End. Whence it is that St. Paul lays so great a
 stress upon it, as to regulate all the rest of his Notions and
 1 Cor. 12. 7. Practice by it. He declares Edification the end and the mea-
 sure of the use of all extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit. Where-
 14. 4. fore he prefers the Gifts that edify others to those that edify
 v. 1, 2. our selves, and Prophesying to all Gifts, because the most
 13. 1, 2, 3. useful; and Charity to them all, because infinitely more be-
 neficial to our selves and others than all the rest: As appears
 4, ad 2. from its Duration, and the Peculiar Advantage of its other
 Characters.

The Apostle therefore regulated his Communion with one
 Set

Set of the true Worshippers of God or the other, by *Edification* as a common Standard, by which he regulated the use and value of all the Gifts and Graces of the Spirit : So that 'tis not to be suppos'd, that he who aim'd so much at Edification, would have taught the Worship of God without the Observation of any Ceremonys of the Establish'd Church, if he had not thought, that that simple way of Worship tended most to the building up of Christians in their Holiness and Comfort : And yet he thought himself oblig'd to worship God sometimes in the use of those Ceremonys, that he might not irritate the Jews, and hinder his Usefulness and their Edification ; but might on the contrary win upon them, and testify that he did not think, that God had cast away his People of the Seed of Abraham, or that they were to be treated like Castaways, by a total Abstinence from their Communion. He declares indeed that he was free from all, that is, from any Obligation to serve Mens Humors, or the Ceremonial Law : But yet that he was a Servant to all, that he might not preach and labour in vain. To them that were under the Law, i. e. of Moses, he became as under the Law, that he might gain them that were under the Law : To them that were without the Law, i. e. of Moses, as without the Law, that he might gain them that were without the Law : To strong Men in Christ he made use of all his Liberty, and conceal'd no part of his most advanc'd Knowledge ; whilst to the Weak he became as weak : Being thus made all things to all Men, that he might save some. That was the End he aim'd at : And therefore he took all imaginable Care, that his Christian Knowledge and Liberty, as well as his Power, should be us'd to the Edification and not to the Destruction of any, for whom Christ had dy'd. He was resolv'd not to ruin weak Jews, nor weak Christians ; but chose to bear the Infirmitys of both, yielding as far as he could to the assuming Temper of the one, and the tender Consciences of the other, without giving countenance to the Faults of either side. He thought Occasional Communion a proper Method to heal their Breaches, and to discharge a good Conscience : Hoping thereby to please all Men in all things, and to avoid the Offence of Jew and Gentile. Wherefore he enjoins them, not only in imitation of him, but of our common Pattern, who pleas'd not himself, to please their Neighbours for their Good to Edifica-
tion,

1 Cor. c.
12, 20, 21,
22.

Rom. 15. 1.

V. 2, 3, 7

Gal. 5. 2. tion. For he knew this was not only a proper Expedient to win them over from their Follies, but a good Opportunity to act Christian Forbearance and Toleration; no inconsiderable part of that Godliuelf, which ought to be our constant Exercise.

Thus he promoted his own Edification, and that of others, by Occasional Conformity to the establish'd Church. But his Conformity was always manag'd with a due Guard and Caution, lest he should countenance and abet the Modes of Worship and Discipline he only bore with. He call'd all Men to Liberty, proclaiming a Freedom from Moses's Law, publicly to the Gentiles in Asia and Greece, and privately to the most eminent of the Reform'd Jews at Jerusalem, when he went
2. 2. thither to consult about the Reform'd Gentiles. But where he thought the Jews Prejudices so great, and their Knowledg so weak and confus'd, as that it was altogether unlikely to convince them, or to get any thing by his endeavours to do it, but Hatred and Opposition in the Course of his Ministry, which,
Ibid. comparing to a Race, he expresses under the Metaphor of running in vain; he not only conceal'd his Knowledg, but worship'd God in their Way; circumcising Timothy, and making Vows, and purifying himself according to the Law, at the time of their Accomplishment. But when he did so, it was always done in that manner, and under those Circumstances, that the Jews could infer no more from his Practice, than that he did not think them sinful: and so could, according to his Christian Liberty, comply with them upon Occasion. But when the Jews would impose them upon him or others, or by any other overt Act declare, that they expected his Compliance with them, as things that were necessary or preferable to the Simplicity of the Gospel: Or when at any time his Compliance would have made it a necessary Inference, that he thought them so; then he abstain'd from the use of them, stood up in the Defence of his Liberty, and commanded others in the
5. 1. Name of the Lord, not to be entangled again with any Yoke of Bondage.

Thus, for Example, he circumcis'd Timothy a Greek at Lystra, that he might not irritate nor offend the Jews in those Quarters: But would not suffer Titus to be circumcis'd at Jerusalem, lest the Jews should have taken Umbrage, that he thought Circumcision necessary. For the Jews at Jerusalem, who

who were mighty High-Flyers, demanded it ; coming as Spys to en-
 snare him, and see what they could get from his Practice for the
 Advantage of their Ceremonys. And would have certainly given out,
 that the Cause of Liberty had been yielded up, if Titus had been
 forc'd to submit to the Law, at the time, that St. Paul came to Je-
 rusalem, to vindicate the Freedom of the Gentiles from its Obligation.
 Upon this Occasion therefore, he boldly declares and asserts his O-
 pinion, gives no Subjection to these Imposers ; but defends Titus, Gal. 2. 3,
 and forbids him to be compell'd, that he might not betray Christian 4. 5.
 Liberty, and this Truth of the Gospel, that we are free from all
 Men, and only under the Law to Christ. In the same manner he
 complys with the Advice of James and the Elders to observe the
 Law of Moses and the Rites it enjoin'd ; when they intimated,
 that they did not expect his Compliance, under the Notion of Obe-
 dience to that Law ; but only as an Agreement with their Opinion,
 and a prudent Method to avoid offending the Jews, who were very
 zealous of that Law themselves, and very angry with him, for his
 Zeal against it ; upon the Supposition that he taught the Jews, that
 were among the Gentiles to forsake it. And to shew that this was
 their sense of the matter ; they farther add, they had declar'd the
 Gentiles (and consequently him as their Apostle) free from its Ob- Acts 21. a
 ligation. But when the Jews would have persuaded the Galatians to 20 ad 25.
 have observ'd Moses's Law, as Persons under it, or oblig'd by it,
 and to whom this Compliance by consequence was necessary, he for- Gal. 5. 2.
 bids them the Compliance upon pain of Damnation.

And no wonder he should manage himself thus in relation to the
 Ceremonys of the Law ; since he often declares them things indif- ver. 6.
 ferent : And therefore was oblig'd to regulate his use of them by the
 same Maxims, that he regulated his use of all other things of the
 same nature. He ranks Circumcision (under which, as the Initiato-
 ry Rite, he includes all others enjoin'd to the Jewish Church) with 4. 10, 11.
 the use of Meats, Herbs, and the observation of Days ; and the
 Circumcis'd and Uncircumcis'd in Christ, with Male and Female, Col. 3. 11.
 Barbarian, Scythian, Bond and Free : None of which have any ne- Gal. 3. 28.
 cessary connection with the Fear or the Favour of God, since with
 God there is no respect of Persons. And hence he gives the very
 same Advice to the Circumcis'd and Uncircumcis'd in Christ, as he
 does to the Bond and Free ; commanding 'em all to remain in the State
 wherein they were call'd, without being solicitous to have it alter'd. 1 Cor. 7.
 Since then he declares the Ceremonys of the Establish'd Church to 18, 19, 20, 21.
 be in the Class of indifferent Things ; we may come to a farther
 knowledg when he thought, that he might and ought to comply
 with them, from the Rules he lays down about the use of other
 things of the same nature. Now his Rules about the use of Meats
 unclean by the Law, or by having been offer'd to Idols, seem to
 amount to these : That we ought to use them as far as they will edi-
 fy ; and that we may use them when they don't destroy, either by
 causing the Offence of weak Christians, or the Confirmation of any

Rom. 14. 9. man in his Error. The first of these Rules he lays down in so many words, as the Sum of his Discourse about some indifferent things. And the others may be justly collected from the Directions he gives
 1 Cor. 8. about Meats, that were held unclean, because they had been offer'd to Idols; whether they were eaten in the Idol's Temple, or at
 10. an Idolater's private Table, or in the Believer's House: but which
 10. 27. he had bought in the Shambles, where these Meats had been sold.
 V. 25.

In all these cases he directs them not to eat, where they should by their Example induce an ignorant Christian to do the same; to whom because it was not of Faith, it would be Sin. Nor when they should countenance the Errors of the Heathen, and give 'em reason to conclude they held their Idolatry lawful. And therefore tho they might eat of Meats offer'd to Idols in the Idol's Temple, upon a common Invitation to partake of good Cheer; * yet they might not partake of those very Meats at a Feast in an Idolater's private House, or any where else, if any one did ask 'em to eat of those Meats as a Test, whether they held their Idolatry lawful.
 1 Cor. 8. For if any Man say, Here Christian, "this is offer'd in Sacrifice to
 10. Idols, and I'll watch what you'll do: Then they were to abstain for the sake of his Conscience or Judgment that said so; that their Liberty to eat those Meats might not be made a Reason, for
 V. 29. him to judge, that his Idolatry was allowable. For, says the Apostle, whether ye eat or drink, do all to God's Glory; and therefore don't do it, when it will give Offence to the Gentiles, that is, to the Heathens (or when it will cause them to offend) no more than you would do it, to give an occasion of Offence to the Jews, or to the Church of God, whether of Jews or Gentiles; since in this case
 V. 31, 32. you would walk as uncharitably as in the other. But these being the only cases wherein the use of Meats offer'd to Idols was forbid, in all others it was allow'd. And since these Rules were given about the use of Meats, under the notion of indifferent things, the same Rules belong to the Observation of the Jewish Ceremonys: Which St. Paul always comply'd with, when they gave no offence to the Reform'd Jews and Reform'd Gentiles; and as constantly abstained from, when the Compliance would have given Offence to either.
 1 Cor. 10. 32.

And as St. Paul comply'd with Modes in Worship that were indifferent, so he join'd in Worship with a Church, that had many *Corruptions* and Irregularitys too. For that the Establish'd Church contain'd many, we have shewn at large before. But he join'd with her in order to exercise his Christian Charity, and to become more useful, and without ever joining in those Parts which were so corrupt. And he thought avoiding all Communion in any part of the Worship that was corrupt, and constant Communion with the

* That it was lawful to eat Meats offer'd to Idols in the Idol's Temple is plain, since in the 9th ver. the believing Corinthians are said to have that Liberty. And in the 10th ver. this Liberty is called Knowledge: and the use of this Liberty being only forbid in the Case of Scandal, it follows, that 'tis lawful in its self, and in any Circumstances, that of Scandal only excepted.

Church it self, that had those Corruptions, would be a sufficient guard against giving them any Countenance or Encouragement. In this he had his great Lord and Master for a Pattern, who join'd in the Worship of the Temple and the Synagogue among the Jews, in the Days of his Life; tho there were such Deviations in a great many parts of it from Moses's Institution, that had he then arose from the Dead, he wou'd never have own'd it for his. And yet I suppose it will not be said, that either our Saviour or his Apostles, the great Reformers of Mankind, gave any Countenance to the Corruptions of God's Worship.

In fine, the same Rules that directed the Apostles, hold for ever in the use of indifferent things; and particularly in Conforming to a Church, that has, or is thought to have any Irregularity and Defects. And if the Occasions wherein Conformity with such a Church is us'd and forborn, be regulated by these Principles, how humorfom soever occasional Compliances with them may appear to Men, who do not consider, or are resolv'd to banter and ridicule: It will be allow'd by all sober Minds, to be a Practice, built upon the most durable Foundation; even upon Charity, which must last, when a great many other Christian Gifts and Virtues will fail. I don't think it worth my while to make any particular Application of the Practice and Principles of the Apostles, to the Occasional Conformity, and the stated Abstinence of the Dissenters from the Ceremonys of the Church. I am afraid of being tedious. And I think I have taken care to represent the Case of the Reform'd Jews and Gentiles in the Apostolical Times, so parallel and analogous to that of the Reform'd Establish'd Church and the Dissenters, that a particular Application is unnecessary. The intelligent Reader will be able, by casting his Eye a little back, to save me the pains, and fix it better in his own Memory.

I shall only say this, that I am heartily sorry, some Gentlemen of uncommon Penetration and Discernment, who have taken a great deal of Pains, to convince the Dissenters of the Hypocrisy and Absurdity of Occasional Communion, had not liv'd in the Apostles Days; that they might have set them right in this perverse Practice. Their Arguments had been as unanswerable to them, as they are now to the Nonconformists. For they would have told St. Peter, St. Paul and the rest of 'em, that either Compliance with the Establish'd Church was lawful or unlawful: If lawful, that they ought to comply always: If unlawful, how could they comp'y at all? Another Gentleman wou'd have convinc'd 'em, with the Assistance of Mr. Pool's, and the Assembly's Annotations upon 1 Kings 18. 21. that such Ambidexter Doings was halting between two Opinions, and an uncertainty in Judgment not to be allow'd. Or if their Reason had not been so successful, they cou'd not have fail'd to have perswaded 'em by their Rhetoric. For they wou'd have assur'd 'em, "That it was being Proteus's in Religion, playing at "Bopeep with God Almighty, and halting betwixt God and Baal: "That on.

Mr. D. F's Enquiry into the Occasional Conformity of Dissenters in Cases of Pre-ferment.
Mr. Stubbs's Sermon, For God or for Baal; or, No Neutrality in Religion; preach'd against Occasional Communion.

Mr. D. F's
Inquir. &c.
p. 1c, 11.
Mr. Stubb's
Sermon. p. 1c.

"That it was like a Ship with her Sails half'd some back and some full;
"Like a Workman that builds with one hand, and pulls down with the other;
"Like a Fisherman, who catches Fish with one hand, and throws them in-
"to the Sea with the other; like every thing which signifies nothing. They
"would have assur'd them that to say a Man could be of two Religions, was
"a Contradiction, unless there were two Gods to worship, or he had two
"Souls to save. And that Religion was the Sacred Profession of the Name
"of God; serving him, believing in him, expecting from him: and like
"the God it refers to, was in one and the same Object, one and the same
"thing, indivisible and inseparable: That there was in it no Neuter Gen-
"der, no Ambiguous Article, God or Bial: and that Mediums were
"impossible. If they had but had the good luck to prevent the
"Occasional Communion of the Apostles by these masterly Strokes of Reason
"and Rhetoric, they might have prevented the like Practice among the Dis-
"senters; or silenc'd 'em at least as a parcel of Shufflers and Legerdemains.
"But since the Apostles had the good fortune to escape their Lath, and their
"Attempts to prevent this Practice, 'tis to be hop'd that for the future the
"Dissenters may do so too.

P O S T S C R I P T.

Julian's
Arts to un-
dermine
and extir-
pate Chri-
stianity, by
Mr. Sam.
Johnson.

IT may not be improper to take notice of the Arts that Julian the Apo-
state us'd to extirpate Christianity. Possibly he will hardly now a days be
allow'd to have been a Persecutor, for the Gentleman made no Sanguinary
Laws against the Christians. He equally envy'd their Doctrine, the Honor
of Martyrdom, and Success. But if his Persecution of the Christians was not
so violent, yet certainly no Methods were ever so well contriv'd for their Ex-
tirpation. He first expos'd them under the Name of Galileans to Scorn and
Contempt. In the next place he pull'd down their Academys and Schools.
He then proceeded to incapacitate them for all Places Civil and Military; and
when he had disarm'd them, fell to divide the Spoil.

Mr. Quick's
Synodicon,
Introd.
Sect. 21,
& 29.

It is remarkable too, that the depriving the Protestants in France of the
Capacity of holding any Office or Place of Trust, which had been confirm'd
to them by several Articles of the Edict of Nantz, was one of the first steps
taken to repeal that Edict, and extirpate the Reformation.

It will not be amiss neither to insert these *Occasional Doctrines and Practices*
of the Apostles.

v. p. 50, 51.

St. Peter generally worshipp'd God with the use of Jewish Ceremonys, but
sometimes without them.

v. p. 52, 53.

St. Paul worshipp'd God generally without the Jewish Ceremonys, but
sometimes with them.

Acts 16. 3.

He advis'd Timothy to be circumcis'd at Lystra, but would not allow Ti-
tus to be circumcis'd at Jerusalem.

Gal. 2. 3.

And he did it in a Progress made to deliver a Decree, which term'd Cir-
cumcision a Subversion of mens Souls.

Acts 15. 24.

He advis'd all that were Jews to remain so; and yet told the Galatians, if
they became Jews they could not be sav'd.

1 Cor. 7. 12.

He allows the Corinthians to eat Meats offer'd to Idols, in the Idols Tem-
ple; and forbids them to eat those Meats at an Idolater's private Temple.

Gal. 5. 2.

He allows the Corinthians to eat Meats offer'd to Idols, in the Idols Tem-
ple; and forbids them to eat those Meats at an Idolater's private Temple.

1 Cor. 8. 10.

He allows the Corinthians to eat Meats offer'd to Idols, in the Idols Tem-
ple; and forbids them to eat those Meats at an Idolater's private Temple.

10. 27, 28.

He that has read the Scriptures, till he is able to solve these Paradoxes,
will understand the Reasons of Occasional Conformity, and none else.

